

# **SURVIVAL MAP FOR A RUSSIAN MUSICIAN IN EUROPE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

LAVRUKHINA ANNA:

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The purpose of this thesis was to collect information on music business in general and the differences between the way music industry is currently developing in Russia, compared to the European countries. Also, the objective of this research was to collect information about Russian musicians nowadays and to analyze their opportunities on the European market.

This study was mostly carried out as a field project, thus more attention has been paid to the opinions of experienced delegates and music industry professionals from Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Russia the writer of the thesis was lucky enough to meet personally during Moscow Music Week 2017. Different approaches and realities were compared to convey the state music world is currently in. Despite of vast majority of empirical content, there's also a theoretical section, which was written based on the leading music business books, articles and studies.

A comprehensive research of specialists' books, videos, articles and music industry related web sources gave a great and occasionally unexpected but rather educational insight into the topic of Russian music industry and the chances for Russian musicians nowadays to make it abroad. The majority of the interviewees as well as the literature used for writing this thesis stated, that it's not only possible for a Russian musician or a band to become successful in Europe, it's just a matter of time.

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Key words: music industry, live music, networking, Europe, Russia

## CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION .....	5
2	MUSIC BUSINESS IN EUROPE.....	7
2.1	The Music Business In General .....	7
2.2	Copyright and Licenses, Publishing and Record Deals .....	8
2.2.1	Copyrights and Licences .....	8
2.2.2	Music Publishing and Record Deals .....	11
2.3	Live Music Business .....	12
2.3.1	Touring .....	12
2.3.2	Festivals .....	15
2.3.3	Showcase festivals .....	18
2.3.4	Booking Agency Business .....	23
2.4	Music Management .....	24
2.5	Music Media and Social Media in Music Business .....	26
2.6	Networks in Music Business.....	28
2.7	Digital distribution, downloading, streaming .....	29
3	MUSIC BUSINESS IN RUSSIA VS MUSIC BUSINESS IN EUROPE.....	31
3.1	Russian Music Industry in General.....	31
3.2	Copyright, Publishing and Record Deals.....	33
3.3	Live Music Business: Touring, Festivals, Booking agency business.....	34
3.3.1	Russian Festivals.....	35
3.3.2	Touring in Russia .....	43
3.3.3	Booking agencies and Music management.....	45
3.4	Music and Social media in Music business.....	47
3.5	Networks in Music Business .....	49
3.6	Digital distribution, downloading, streaming .....	51
4	MOSCOW MUSIC WEEK.....	54
4.1	Moscow Music Week case.....	54
4.2	Conferences and workshops: up-to-date topics in Russian Music Business .....	55
5	CONCLUSION .....	62
	REFERENCES.....	69
	APPENDICES .....	73
	Appendix 1. Interview Andraž Kajzer (MENT Ljubljana festival) .....	73
	Appendix 2. Interview Sandor Kozlov (The press executive and program organizer at A38 in Budapest, Hungary/ Sziget festival, Hungary/ Cultural attaché at Hungarian embassy in Moscow, Russia) .....	78

Appendix 3. Interview Christoffer Gunnarsson (Klubb Kalabalik, Festival in Blädinge, Kronobergs Län, Sweden).....	93
Appendix 4. Interview Martin Lippert (music journalist, Germany) .....	96
Appendix 5. Interview Aron Lukasz (Bankito feztival in Budapest, Hungary).....	100
Appendix 6. Interview Matjaž Manček (Kino Šiška centre for Urban Culture, MENT Festival in Ljubljana, Slovenia) .....	103

## 1 INTRODUCTION

The Rolling Stone magazine, issued the special edition of the 500 greatest albums of all time in 2012. It was not the first list of “the greatest” without any single Russian band or an artist in the list, leaving aside on top. I’ve been wondering for quite a long while, how that’s possible. This is one of the major reasons I’ve decided to write my thesis on the topic of “Survival Map for a Russian musician in Europe”. In order to do so, I deeply and thoroughly studied the case and came out with an interesting and unexpected outcome.

What is the secret mechanism? What is the key to success? To map it out and to probably help some of newcomers from Russia to conquer the international stage I wrote my thesis. It is such an interesting journey and I encourage you to join me! Most of those musicians would love to have a guide that would get them through with their career. Most of them don’t know what to start with. They are confused by comparing Russian and European music industry, because they seem to be so different one from another (which is, basically, understandable, since according to my study, Russian music industry is currently at the state US or Europe were several decades ago).

I want it to be a real survival map for a Russian or any other musician who’s so far struggling with self-definition, searching for his or her own style, dreaming about the music career and probably even making big steps toward their goal. I want to shed the light on touring and recording, I want to explain the concept of copyrighting plainly, in order to make it understandable for those who will read my thesis.

My thesis mainly describes the current state of music business in general (especially, European music business since this is the subject of study) and the history of Russian music business. I am going to talk about music management and the importance of socials. I will also tell about showcase festivals in details which, in my opinion, are essential for those who would love to become noticed and heard of. The main focus of my thesis will be Russian music industry, the opportunities for a Russian musician in Europe in general and Moscow Music Week

case in particular as in the future it can become a launch-pad for those Russian artists who can't imagine their lives without making music.

## **2 MUSIC BUSINESS IN EUROPE**

### **2.1 The Music Business In General**

The music business, or the music industry, is a complex system of music distribution, music production and music sales in a number of formats, according to Karl Hagstrom Miller (2008, 1). People supposedly gave music in exchange for money ever since it once appeared. Broadside sellers, troubadours and rhapsodists alongside with traveling music coaches developed improvised fundamental music business model that differed less in kind than in scale in comparison to the modern music industry. (Shuker, 2012)

These days three recording and distribution companies dominate the global music industry. Together, they manufacture and distribute over 200 record labels, supplying music wholesalers and retailers with about 80 percent of the world market. (Spellman 2008, 2) They are: Universal Music Group, Warner Music Group and Sony/BMG Music Entertainments.

In contrast to non-music industries, some of which have been in existence for hundreds of years, the record industry as recently as fifty years ago was, by and large, a backroom affair. In one short generation, it became a worldwide \$40 billion industry bigger than both the book publishing and motion picture industries. The music business grew so quickly, in fact, that no one has yet been able to how to run the store. (Spellman, 2008)

The music business kept on developing and constantly changing itself and suddenly became too administrative, involved more with statistics and numbers than with music itself. According to Peter Spellman (2008), many have complained about what music industry has become “run by lawyers and accountants”. Some in the industry prefer to treat music like other industries treat cars and refrigerators, but music cannot really be treated as such. As the creative extensions of human spirit, music will always defy attempts at control. Often, just when the majors catch up with a “new” music trend, they find that the market has shifted and music lovers have moved on to something else, so you, as a young

promising musician, have all the chances to become the very new, unique and anything but fabricated trend. (Passman, 2015)

## **2.2 Copyright and Licenses, Publishing and Record Deals**

### **2.2.1 Copyrights and Licences**

Every musician has to deal with copyright straight away after he or she created their first song, melody, lyrics or production. When it comes to copyright, one of the most important things is to understand how it actually works. According to Donald Passman (2015, 225), the legal definition of copyright is a “limited duration monopoly”. The point of copyright is to promote the progress of “useful arts” by giving creators exclusive rights for their work for a while. In order to be copyrightable, one’s work should be original and tangible, meaning, something solid: it can be either lyrics carefully written down or a recorded track, since there is no way to copyright the idea which exists only in one’s head (even if it’s truly genius). (Passman 2015,225-226)

When you have a copyright, you get the exclusive rights to:

- Reproduce the work (meaning, if you created the song, it can’t be recorded, put in the soundtrack of a movie, otherwise copied in any way without your permission).
- Distribute copies of the work (meaning, selling records to public).
- Perform the work publicly (meaning, for your song to be played at concert venues, on the radio, on television, through the streaming services, bars, libraries, parks – shortly put – any public spaces where your music can be heard).
- Make a derivative work (meaning, a creation based on another work: the original melody is a copyrighted original work and add once one, adds, for instance, parody lyrics, it constitutes a new, separate work; it’s called “derivative”, because it’s “derived from the original”.
- Display the work publicly (in the music area, it applies to the websites that display lyrics). (Passman, 2015)



There are some exceptions to the copyright monopoly rules, which are known as *compulsory licenses*, meaning, one must issue a license for those eager to use one's original work. The five compulsory licenses, as Passman (2015, 228) states, are: cable television rebroadcast, public broadcasting system, jukeboxes, digital performances of records, phonorecords and digital downloads of non-dramatic musical compositions.

Nearly nobody keeps on using jukeboxes on a daily basis anymore, so this one seems to be kind of out-dated, and in the opposite, the digital performance of records, which was added to the list only in 1995 and then modified in 1998, seems to be pretty vital in today's world, therefore, needs to be paid the closest attention to, alongside with digital downloads, which are also huge in music business nowadays and called a *compulsory mechanical license*. (Passman 2015, 229). Another term for a deeper understanding is *mechanical royalties* (or *mechanicals*), developed in the 1909 Copyright Act and referred to payments for devices "serving to mechanically reproduce the sound". Even though devices haven't reproduced sound "mechanically" since the 1940s, the name has stuck and the monies paid to copyright owners for the manufacture and distribution of records are still called *mechanical rights*. (Passman 2015, 229)

The concept of a *compulsory license* for these mechanical rights grew out of a concern in Congress that the music industry was going to develop into a gigantic monopoly (we may still make it). This desire to keep copyright owners from controlling the world resulted in the compulsory license for record, which accomplishes its mission nicely. (Passman, 2015)

Mechanicals in Europe are a percentage of wholesale price, which covers all songs of the record. This means the rate has nothing to do with the length of the composition or even the number of songs (as opposed to the way things are in the United States and Canada). The same amount of mechanicals is paid for an album that contains as it paid, for instance, for one with twelve or even more (rarely). European mechanicals are usually paid to a government-affiliated agency.

For example, mechanicals in the United Kingdom are currently 8,5% of PPD (published price to dealers) and the rate in the rest of Europe is set by BIEM (Bureau International des Societes Gerant les Droits d'Enregistrement et de Reproduction Mecanique). BIEM is a group of agencies in each territory that collect mechanical royalties for their affiliates. Currently the BIEM rate is 8,712% of PPD. (Passman 2015, 234)

Although it doesn't seem to be working as flawlessly as it supposed to, according to Sandor Kozlov (2017): "...I learnt that the system within Europe doesn't generally work well. For instance, you're playing in Germany, after you played the gig, money goes to Gema (copyright organization in Germany) and then they have to distribute the money to a Hungarian, for instance, copyright company but it usually doesn't happen.

You have no clue where the money ends up. I know it, because I used to manage a lot of Hungarian musicians abroad, wherever we played abroad, we filled in the papers according to the international register rules and then 3 or 4 times a year musician supposed to get the money from the copyright organization for playing live – by post or by online transaction, it doesn't really matter. Hungarian company always attaches a list where you can see the detailed payment, so you can always check what are these for exactly – radio broadcast, TV broadcast, etc. Usually if the band plays about 20 gigs a year abroad they tend to get about, well, one copyright payment back.

It has to be changed in some way because the communication between copyright companies is not so perfect. On the level of recording TV or radio broadcast, for example, it works much better, but on the level of the live gigs it usually doesn't work so well. But the money is quite big! I mean, if you go to the German club with the capacity of 50 people of audience, according to the copyright law, you're supposed to get paid at around 1000 euros for playing at 5 places in a row, so it's weird that the money gets lost somewhere else. And there's absolutely no copyright laws working as they should in the United States when it comes to European acts performing there. It doesn't matter how big you are when it comes to the live shows.

It matters because you are the copyright holder. The label has the right over your records – they can control the record sales, but they can't control the live performances, the song broadcast on the radio, TV commercials or music videos.” (Sandor Kozlov, 2017)

### **2.2.2 Music Publishing and Record Deals**

Young musicians have to be aware of what the differences are between music publishing agencies or companies and record labels in order to make a right choice between them. Today's evolving roles in the music business can result in a lot of confusion over who does what, who owns what, and, who gets paid for what. The advent of the internet and multi-media has led some successful artists to form their own labels and/or music publishing companies and work with larger labels for distribution; adding to the frustration!

A simple explanation of the 'standard' roles of Record Labels and Music Publishers for non-named artists. This is only a guideline: contracts and rights can be written in any manner and legal counsel should always be consulted before entering into an agreement.

*Record labels* are generally responsible for:

- developing the artist,
- working with producers,
- paying for/arranging studio time,
- mixing and mastering,
- graphics,
- packaging,
- distribution,
- marketing.

(Shwartz, 2009)

The record label owns the master and all associated rights under a sound recording copyright. The contract between the Artist and the Record Label

usually stipulates that the Artist is paid a percentage of net sales from all sources. In this case, 'net' often means after the Label has recovered its initial costs for production, distribution, marketing, etc. The most important, and most expensive, of these services is marketing. Getting the word out to the masses is paramount to a successful album. (Shwartz 2009, 25-30)

A music publishing company handles four different areas:

- Performing Arts Rights -Royalties paid for radio/internet play and for live performances of the Work by someone other than the artist or owner of the works (i.e., ASCAP and BMI).
- Mechanical Rights - Royalties paid to the owner of each recording's copy of the work, despite who is in charge of releasing a record: an artist him or herself, another artist, a record company or a licensor.
- Synchronization - Licensing fees are paid to the owner of the works for use in television, motion pictures or commercials.
- Sheet Music - Royalties paid to the owner of the Works for the sales of sheet music (paper or digital). (Shwartz 2009, 48-52)

The music publishing company is generally responsible for marketing the works to record labels, other artists, advertising agencies and production companies on behalf of the artist. Music publishing companies and artists enter into a contract where the artist agrees to transfer all rights of a work to the music publishing company for a specific period of time. The standard terms are 1/3 and 2/3 share to the artist and to the publishing company, accordingly. If the work is not licensed at end of term, and the contract is not renewed, all rights revert back to the artist. (Shwartz, 2009)

## **2.3 Live Music Business**

### **2.3.1 Touring**

Generally, touring is a series of gigs played at the various venues and in different locations. It is commonly used as a promotion tool for a new release and in order to build up a fan-base. Besides the exciting part of seeing the world (or at least

other cities of one's Motherland), touring is extremely important for solo-musicians or bands in order to earn their living. (Goldstein 2008, 186.) Live acts became the ultimate revenue for musicians of all kinds and it only seems to be growing bigger (figure1). It happened due to global digitalization of music and the dramatic drop of the record sales.

While majors like Pink Floyd used to earn 62% of their paycheck via recording, nowadays they are forced to reconsider their positions and earn their living through ticket sales. Their fans will come to see the show at any ticket price, which is the main reason for ticket prices to go higher over time.

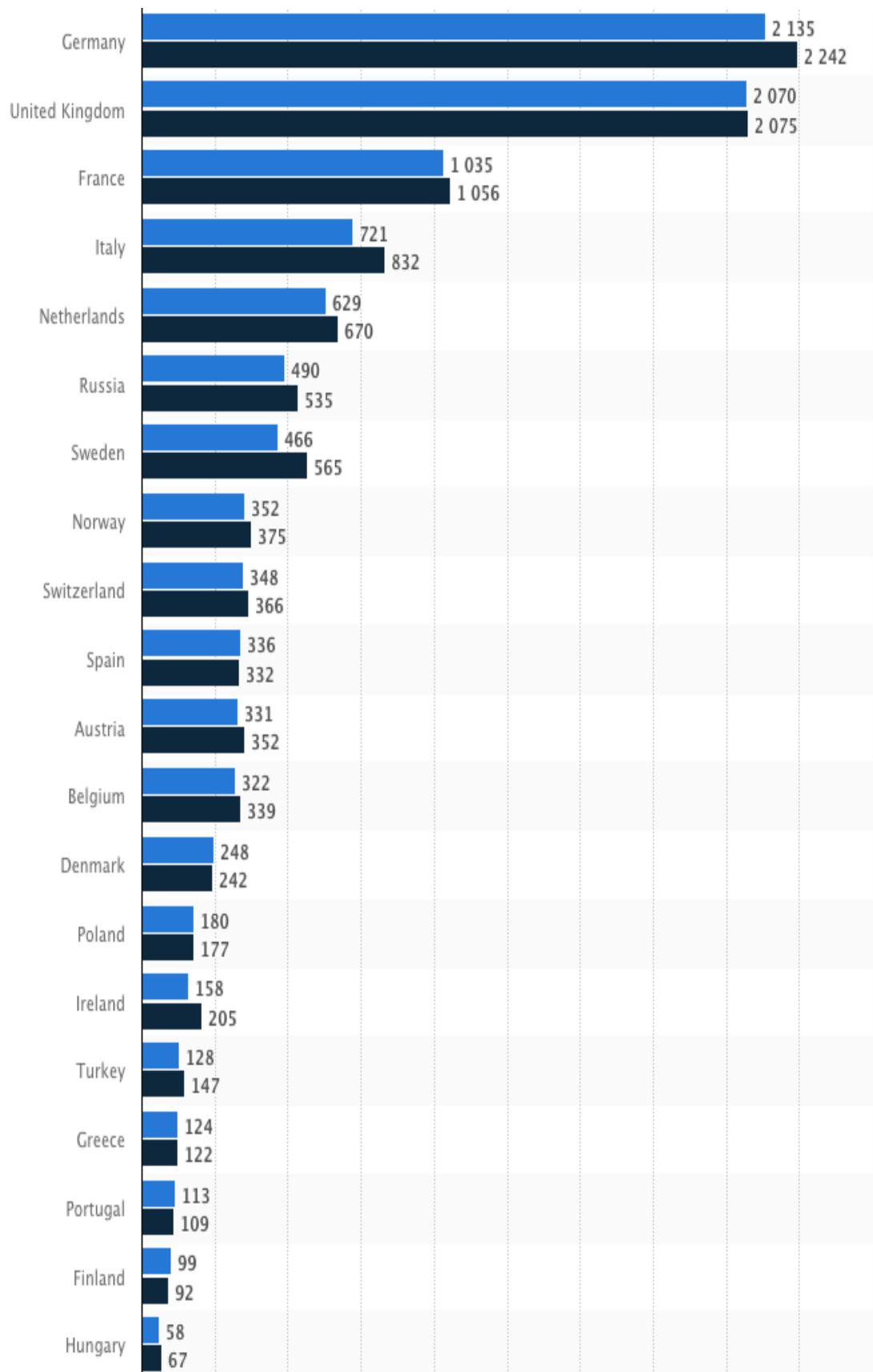


FIGURE 1. Ranking of European live music markets based on estimated market value in 2017 and 2021 (in million U.S. dollars)

Touring gives great opportunities for a musician such as networking and improving their live performance. Even though touring basically means playing the same programme at the different locations, every gig is unique for an artist and his or her fans. The style of a show always depends on the genre of a solo musician or a band. For instance, the atmosphere at the punk gig will be completely different compared to electronic duo performance. But according to Shuker (2012), despite the fact that there are different styles of concerts, every each one of the has one thing in common: the feeling of community, which engages the artist itself, the audience before the stage, and backstage crew. Having a crew is essential for a musician on tour. Tour manager, business manager, promoter, light engineer, sound engineer, stage hands, backline technicians for instruments, and security are the must-have for majors, but in case of a baby act, the crew might be smaller or there might be no crew at all. (Shuker 2012, 49-50.)

### **2.3.2 Festivals**

Shuker (2012) states, that festivals have been constantly influencing the live music industry and made a huge impact on its history. Festivals are extremely important in order to keep traditions alive, to increase an audience base and to give a feeling of community. (Shuker 2012, 50)

From the musicians' perspective, festivals are usually a great opportunity to introduce themselves to the audience naturally bigger than their personal fandoms; therefore, festivals are extremely helpful when it comes showcasing their talents, getting spotted and recognized by music media or networking. (Goldstein 2008, 202-203)

Festivals are usually held for up to three days, in some cases, really big festivals with enormous production behind can last for one week. Most festivals offer a wide range of artists to the audience, which are usually part of a specific musical style. According to Shuker (2012), using several stages at the festival gives a great opportunity for more than 100 artists to play and to become heard of over the only one weekend. Festivals are rather important economic-wise for the regions they are located at. Since festivals attract an awful lot of national and international visitors, let alone locals, such events enormously boost the cultural tourism. (Shuker 2012, 51)

Top-10 Summer Music Festivals in Europe, according to European Best Destinations website:

- **Tomorrowland, Belgium**

Tomorrowland (picture1) was launched for the first time in 2005 and ever since has become one of the largest electronic dance music festivals on Earth. (European Best...,2017)

- **Exit, Serbia**

Exit, which is run by a non-profit organization, has been named Best Summer Music Festival 2016, according to European Best Destinations (2017). It is annually held in Serbia, and considered to be one of the best festival venues in the world by many. Exit festival is truly unique and initially was a student movement promoting peace and democracy in Serbia. (European Best...2017)

- **NOS Primavera Sound, Porto – Portugal**

Nos Primavera Sound is an offspring of Primavera Sound, which has been held in Park Forum, Barcelona for no less than 16 years. Every year it hosts a lot of artists of various genres and styles as well as 80,000 people from 58 different countries, which makes it truly international and known worldwide. (European Best...2017)

- **Glastonbury Festival, the UK**

Glastonbury Festival, which sometimes called these days Woodstock, is the largest music and performing arts open-air in the world and a role model for all the music festivals that have appeared after its launch. (European Best...2017)

- **Sziget Festival, Hungary**

Sziget Festival is a week-long festival, which outgrown from a student non-profit movement to one of the largest multicultural European events. It has been held since 1993. It's the second event after Glastonbury which was labeled European Woodstock by media due to its extent: Sziget annually hosts about 400 000 fans



from of 70 nationalities, which is quite impressive. Moreover, it extremely boosts cultural tourism in the region of Budapest which itself has plenty of tourist attractions to offer. (European Best...2017)

- **Rock In Roma, Italy**

Rock in Roma has only appeared 9 years ago and already took a stance in line with the largest international rock festivals. Annually takes place in Rome, Italy. Over the years Rock In Roma hosted such majors as Iggy and the Stooges, Franz Ferdinand, The Cure, Smashing Pumpkins, Mark Knopfler and many-many more; it was also visited by nearly 1.500.000 people. (European Best...2017)

- **Iceland Airwaves, Iceland**

Since its launch in an airplane hangar in 1999, Iceland Airwaves has become one of the foremost annually held showcases for new musical acts – Icelandic and international. It was a huge success, according to millions of followers, an almost immediate fandom literally built from the scratch and rave reviews from music media, such as, for instance, Rolling Stone magazine, that referred to Iceland Airwaves as to “The hippest weekend on the annual music-festival calendar.” (European Best...2017)

- **Soundwave Festival, Tisno – Croatia**

Croatian Soundwave festival might be confused with Australian Soundwave – heavy metal and metalcore oriented festival, annually held in Perth, Australia but those two events are not related in any way. Soundwave festival in Tisno, Croatia is going to celebrate its 10th anniversary in 2018, which the creators of the festival call “the final adventure”, obviously, meaning that the festival shuts down in the future.

- **Roskilde Festival, Denmark**

Roskilde Festival is Danish annual week-long festival, which considers to be one of the largest European music festivals and is, in fact, the largest music festival international event in Northern Europe. Back in a day, Roskilde festival’ target audience were hippies, praising love and sun, these day it’s more oriented mainstream European artists, mainly from Scandinavia. (European Best...2017)

- **Du Bout du Monde Festival, France**

French music festival du Bout du Monde is held for more than 10 years in the region of Crozon, France. The duration of the festival has always been 3 days for a decade without any exceptions. It's an international music festival that annually attracts the audience from all around Europe. (European Best...2017)

The festivals above are mentioned and precisely described, because every each one of them has a small stage for beginner acts. Usually those are built up specially to highlight the promising young bands or solo musicians, whose performances were spotted and approved by the organizers during showcase festivals, so they give an opportunity for a young blood to surprise the audience of major events and become bigger.



PICTURE 1. Tomorrowland, Belgium (photo: European Best Destinations website)

### 2.3.3 Showcase festivals

Showcase festivals have become an integral part of the music industry. Not only for the exciting new bands and artists playing but for the simple fact that the

who's who of the music industry all get together in one city for a few days with the sole intention of networking and expanding their business. (Setting a Strategy for playing...2017) Based on the research regarding showcase-festivals, the participants among those were the delegates of showcase-festival and conference Moscow Music Week 2017 stated the following:

Question: Do showcase-festivals and music conferences, that at first were, supposedly, meant to gather together the professionals from the industry, really give an opportunity to new comers to be heard nowadays?

- “Sure, they do. Me and my colleague have been to Moscow Music Week and now 5 Russian acts will play in Slovenia. And MMW booker was at our festival and 2 Slovenian acts have performed in Moscow as a result. And these are just two direct examples” says Matjaž Manček (2017) (Kino Šiška centre for Urban Culture, MENT Festival in Ljubljana, Slovenia).
- “Short answer, yes. This is the only way in my opinion. You'll have to get into the circulation. This is how you can organize tours, festival gigs etc. Personal relationships are much more important than people would think” says Aron Lukasc (2017) (Bankito Festival, Hungary)
- “Really depends what showcase you're at. One interesting learning I found out at MMW was that a lot of the people I met stated they felt more comfortable at smaller showcases/conferences rather than the big ones such as Eurosonic, SXSW etc. The smaller ones bring the advantage of less programming, thus more chances of actually seeing a lot and maybe discovering something you weren't aware of before. At the „big ones”, people tend to flock to the already pre-hyped packed shows, giving smaller and less buzzed-about acts lower chances of getting discovered by the „important industry players”. But apart from that: yes, playing at these events is important” says Martin Lippert (2017) (music journalist, Germany)
- “To be honest I'm not too familiar with showcase festivals. I think it's a good concept and a perfect opportunity for promoters and industry people

to network and get new ideas. It's important that proper audience shows interest as well though or these events might become too in-house with industry people entertaining themselves in a vacuum. The only showcase festival I've been part of myself is Moscow Music Week and for me it's been a great experience. I think in general, in this age, there are lots of musical gatherings in all shapes and sizes.

Definitely a good thing and it means even smaller bands in particular genres or styles can get attention outside of support slots at major events” says Christoffer Gunnarsson (2017) (Klubb Kalabalik, Festival in Blädinge, Kronobergs Län, Sweden)

- ”I think showcase festivals are quite useful. You could hear and see a band you would never discover yourself. I personally booked some of the bands I have seen live at showcase festivals. But it also might play a bad trick with you: I heard of some bands that played their show poorly and got labeled as “the band that played that bad show”” - says Sandor Kozlov (2017) (The press executive and program organizer at A38 in Budapest, Hungary/ Sziget festival, Hungary/ Cultural attaché at Hungarian embassy in Moscow, Russia)
- “Showcase festivals go hand in hand with the music conferences and in my opinion, this is definitely an opportunity for the new coming bands to be heard and also to hear... The only 2 things that differ from the “normal” festivals at showcases are the amount of new coming bands and the number of professionals in one place. These 2 factors make “being heard” much easier. But I wouldn’t consider a showcase festival an event like Pop Idol TV show. You won’t perform at a showcase festival and be famous the next day. It doesn’t work this way. It works in different ways of expanding your network, the number of professionals being aware of you. You can build a tour or get some festival dates, you can find a record label, a publisher, get proper feedback, be noticed by some media, maybe you find a new fan who’ll tell about you to some other professionals who’ll book you for their venue 2 years later...

The European music industry is pretty small and trying out these circles can be very beneficial to young acts. What I mean by “they can also hear” is that the acts performing at showcase festivals should also open their ears at the conference, try to meet new people and of course hear other bands... See what they’re up to, meet new artists from other countries that are dealing with the same challenges as you are. And these contacts can be not only helpful but also new friendships” says Andraž Kajzer (2017) (MENT Ljubljana festival)

Question: Please, list 3 best show-case festivals you would recommend for a DIY musician to attend, in order to pursue their dream to get heard and well-connected.

- “Tallinn Music Week, Spring Break Poznan, MENT Ljubljana. I would also highly recommend a bigger summer festival Pohoda in Slovakia”. – Matjaž Manček (2017).
- “BUSH (Budapest Showcase Hub), MENT Festival, Nouvelle Prague” - Aron Lukasc (2017).
- “Eurosonic / Groningen  
c/o Pop / Cologne  
Waves / Vienna” – Martin Lippert (2017).
- “It depends on the genre. If you’re an indie band you could go to Eurosonic in Groningen, Netherlands or Tallinn Music Week in Estonia, MENT festival in Ljubljana, which are more regional, Reeperbahn festival in Hamburg also is a good one. If you’re a world music musician you could go to WOMEX (the World Music Expo) or MENT or any other festival. If you’re a Jazz band you should go to Jazz Ahead. “-- Sandor Kozlov (2017).

All the participants unanimously stressed the importance of showcase-festivals for beginner musicians in order to make new connections and to become spotted, and even shared their must-visits, although the vast majority of music industry related web resources states that Eurosonic is the “must attend music showcase-festival” in Europe for rather obvious reasons.

Live acts bring most money these days. Performance and show capabilities are the most important factor when playing a showcase festival, so it is important to practice and develop these skills for an artist. For instance, Eurosonic usually has about 400 acts (every each one of those is really good) to competitively showcase for the business professionals' attention. It is important not to be discouraged by the competition: live music business has become such an important income stream that the thirst for new acts won't be quenched for quite a while. And while one will be exposed to a crowd of business pros at all of the above-mentioned events – add m4music in Switzerland and Waves Vienna in Austria – according to iMusician website (2017) Eurosonic exclusively comes with a bonus. Every selected artist to play a showcase in Groningen, where Eurosonic is annually held in, automatically enters the European Talent Exchange Program (ETEP), where about 100 festivals across Europe are ready to book Eurosonic acts for their upcoming festivals. (Setting the Strategy...2017). Musicians that have experienced an instant career boost from European Talent Exchange Program are, for example, Benjamin Clementine and Hozier who now are celebrating a gain of worldwide popularity. (iMusician website, 2017).



PICTURE 2. Aron Lukasc, Martin Lippert and Andraž Kajzer with Stefan Kazaryan, the founder of Moscow Music Week among the other delegates. Networking at the rooftop in Moscow, Russia. (Photo: Renato Horvath)

#### 2.3.4 Booking Agency Business

In case the artist is excited about improving his or her music and live performances, sooner or later he or she will find themselves at the point of a decently built-up fan-base, which accordingly allows him or her to develop their live music career and gives them ability to become a headliner at some local or even international events, it is the right time to look for a suitable booking agent agency and booking agency. (Cattermole, 2012). Booking agencies take care of artists' live performances and therefore book them in order to play in the clubs or pubs, festivals and open-air or sometimes even private events, that might easily pay out better than a regular show in a night club. Due to the well-established networking system, it is possible for booking agencies to get the artist support slots on the festivals and there's no way on Earth one could do it on his or her own without a helping hand of a booking agent or an agency.

According to Sandor Kozlov (2017): "If you are a big label or a big agency, for instance, you have Sia on your roster. There's a festival that says could I book



Sia from your roster? And you say: “Ok, yes, of course, it costs 300000 euros (although I think she’s worth half a million actually), deal, but could you also book three of my artists alongside with her?” And the festival will have to book three other artists from this agency and suddenly the festival sees its own roster being filled up with the additional acts. And if you’re not anyhow related to the agency, you just have no chance.” (Sandor Kozlov, 2017)

Generally, booking agencies are the main “negotiation-tool” between promoters and artists. According to Frascogna & Hetherington (2004), there are various types of booking agencies which one can generally divide in two main categories:

- *Major Agency*

Major agencies, that are sometimes called “superagencies”, have offices all over the world and operate internationally. Major agencies usually offer deals that are in most cases combined with a record deal. A great example for that would be “13 artists” booking agency, located in the UK. They have over 100 artists of various genres on their roster. (MusicNomad website, 2017)

- *Independent Agency*

Independent agencies are manageable agencies, that in most cases own the only one office in a city and have nothing to do with record deals. Getting involved with a booking agency is a well-reasoned step for a musician, a band or their personal manager in charge (later on that in the following chapter). Searching for the right agency, since there are many to choose from, might become very tricky and long-winded. (Frascogna & Hetherington 2004, 166-167.)

## 2.4 Music Management

The personal manager is the single most important person in musician’s or band’s professional life. A good personal manager can expand your career to its maximum potential and a bad one can rocket, so picking the right manager should be one of the smartest choices in a musicians’ life (Guardian, 2013). Although DIY culture, since it stands for Do It Yourself, diminishes the role of managers and the rest of the crew, but a good manager is essential when a musician realizes he



or she after independently touring and attending several showcase-festivals, for instance, became big enough to ask for maintenance help. There are, of course, some big artist without managers, but they are very much the exception, and they usually have one or more other team members filling this role (Passman 2015, 28). So, according to Passman (2015), there are two major types of managers – a personal manager, I briefly talked about already above, and a business manager.

Personal manager is in charge of:

- Helping you with the major business decisions you might fail to map out by yourself. Technically, a personal manager is your own 24/7 consultant, and he or she'd better be well-educated, since they are going to have the final say on record deals and publishing deals.
- Helping you with creative process by breaking your “lyricist or composer block”, selecting a producer whose productions will be a perfect fit with your songs. He or she will be also taking care of hiring (or firing) band members, selecting photographers, etc.
- Networking the hell out of both of you in order to promote your career by hyping you to everyone he or she meets, helping you with coordination of your publicity campaign, etc.
- Heading your team by introducing you to lawyers and business managers (most probably picking the business manager won't be your own headache when you find a personal manager to do the job). Then again, this person you've chosen for the role of your personal manager should really know types and see the truth in things.
- Coordinating your tours by working with your agents (if you have any) to make the best out of negotiation with promoters, routing the tour, working with your business manager to develop the budget, supervising the road and road managers everything runs smoothly etc.
- Pounding your record company to maximize the advertising and marketing campaigns, for your record, making sure your records are treated as priorities, “screaming at them when they do wrong, praising them when they do right”, etc.
- Generally being a buffer between you and the outside world. (Passman 2015, 28-29).

*Business manager* is simply the person on musician's team who handles musician's money (Passman 2015, 43). He or she collects it, keeps track of it, pays off the bills of an artist, invests it, makes sure of tax returns. So, an artist or artist's personal manager (most probably, the latter, since one only needs business managers when the rest of the crew is pretty much mapped out) should be really-really careful when it comes to picking a best business manager to do the job. For that purpose, it's better to spend some time investigating all of the people on the team (Passman 2015, 11).

## **2.5 Music Media and Social Media in Music Business**

Socials are incredibly important for every DIY musician who's trying to maintain the relationship with his fans and keep them updated, to build-up a brand and a story behind a brand and, what's more importantly, socials are one of the most effective and definitely the cheapest marketing tools, according to the results of research (2017):

"When I was booking bands, I was interested in recorded live performances. You can listen to the songs on Soundcloud but this is not enough. The master track might be cleared out of the mistakes, recorded by session musicians. Studio recording isn't the same as live performances. Sometimes you can have a really-really bad recording and a fabulous performance and vice versa (beautiful recording and a shitty performance).

YouTube is the most important channel, Facebook is only important in the follow-up, if you play for the first time" – Sandor Kozlov (2017)

"You have to talk to the people. Or inform an audience about your music. And in 2017 social media is one of the ways... It's also the easiest and cheapest one. Even if you're not into it, it's still a place where people will look for info regarding your music and concerts if they e.g. heard your song on the radio or elsewhere. Social media goes hand in hand with touring but I'd say nowadays too many bands go on tour too soon. There are so many acts on the road nowadays and the audience is overwhelmed with everything on their plate.

It depends on what I am looking for on the band's Facebook page but I'll

definitely see the profile & cover picture - are there live dates, where are they playing... of course I'll see how many followers do they have as this can give you a certain feel for what's happening... This doesn't mean numbers necessarily correspond to anything but in most cases, it gives you certain info. I also check the about and sometimes the events page... And of course, I check the latest posts to see what the band is up to. The main thing most of the bands forget is that a music Facebook page should have some music up there. One of the best solutions is to have your last single pinned on your wall and please don't forget to put some useful links in the about section." -- Andraž Kajzer (2017)

"I think social media is very important today, especially internationally. I think locally one can reach success by being a prominent live artist. Social media is a great tool either way. Good imagery and/or videos can help a lot with first impressions. It's what I look for." – Christoffer Gunnarsson (2017)

"Does anybody actually visit the actual band page on FB anymore? I personally tend to that only in a couple of very seldom cases: liking it for the first time, checking if they've currently been active if I liked them some time ago and feel I „haven't heard from them (they may be super active, but the FB algorithm tends to hide that from you), or checking for tour dates. Most of the interaction I have with band / artist pages happens through my newsfeed, or other media reporting / posting on them.

But yes, social media is very important to gain attention - not just in the sense of „you don't exist if you're not on FB / Instagram/ Soundcloud / VK / etc., but also because you can have a direct relationship with fans, followers, media etc. It's just quite hard to reach the point of followership from where a certain organic growth sets in. Basically, I would say: both social media and live are equally important, in the end, both boil down to the same thing: be active, be findable, be there, make yourself heard." – Martin Lippert (2017)

"The first thing what I check is the visuals of the band – considering that I never heard them. If that's catchy, then I'll go for the music, then check their "personality" from their posts. I'd rather say social media is a booster which can be built on real people. You'll have to organize successful tours, place your music on playlists, maintain a good PR. That's how you can be recognized. Then you'll

have the possibility to communicate with your EXISTING audience on social media.” – Aron Lukacz (2017)

“Live performance and touring is the most important and is becoming more and more. Social networks are necessary and can be quite powerful tools to make the tours more efficient. But careful tour planning and great show is essential and by far the most important thing.” Matjaž Manček (2017)

According to the comprehensive results of the research (2017) above, it can be stated, that main music and social media platforms one has to use in order to impress the promoters and keeping up with fans are YouTube, Soundcloud and Facebook.

## **2.6 Networks in Music Business**

It's long been said that success lies not so much in what you know as in who you know. This statement of Peter Spellman (2008) pretty much summarizes the concept and the importance of showcase-festivals. Relationships have been the catalysts of business practice forever. After all, it's not record companies that relate to each other, but people within these companies. Likewise, corporations don't hold conversations – people do. This is good news for everyone who seeks success in music. Your mouth (or your personal manager's mouth, accordingly) is your most valuable marketing tool. In today's information-intense world, you can contact virtually anyone you need to through networking. “Networking” is the process of building a connecting system of people working in the industry who know your talents, skills and goals. These connections will alert and lead you to opportunities in your goal area. Networking presents more of a challenge to some than to others. Those endowed with the gift of gab network with ease. Those of more introspective nature, however, may need to work at developing those social and interactive skills so useful to networking. Time constraints are another barrier to networking. Networking is a high time, low-money marketing strategy, that's why it's important to set realistic networking goals. (Spellman 2008, 67-68)

## 2.7 Digital distribution, downloading, streaming

According to Author Societies website, consumers across Europe are embracing digital media, using new devices and changing the way they access entertainment. In response, music companies have completely changed the way they do business, reinventing business models and licensing a wide range of services. Music rights holders have licensed more than 13 million tracks for use by more than 300 digital services in Europe (Author Societies website, 2015). Currently these are the leading patterns in European digital distribution:

- *Music ownership and accessibility:* These days music companies license a range of services, that not only offer ownership of tracks and albums to the consumers, but also a possibility to constantly access the wide-range online music libraries. Nearly every commercially viable way that offers unlimited access to the music online has been licensed. There is a significant grow detected in number of consumers that access music digitally on a regular base. (The Online Music Market...2015)
- *Digitizing.* Generally, consumers all over the world keep on enjoying digital music services. In the beginning of 2017, there were more than 300 legitimate music services across Europe. (The Online Music Market...2015)
- *Continued growth of music downloads.* Music downloads are the supreme source of digital revenue and yet continue to grow. According to the Online Music Market source (2015), iTunes which belongs to Apple Incorporation, has sold over 10 billion downloads all over the world since it was launched in 2003 and has recently been joined by a scope of contestants among which are 7digital, HMV, AmazonMP3 and Tesco. (The Online Music Market...2015)
- *The remaining increase of music video.* YouTube platform continues to be the largest for watching online videos and accounts for 43% of online videos viewed in the top three markets in Europe which are Germany,

France and the United Kingdom. Other services, such as MTV and VEVO, command significant online audiences. (The Online Music Market...2015)

### 3 MUSIC BUSINESS IN RUSSIA VS MUSIC BUSINESS IN EUROPE

#### 3.1 Russian Music Industry in General

As it is discovered at the previous chapter, music business shouldn't be about the numbers, although sometimes it is. According to report from this year March released by Russia Music Industry (2017):

- Despite having Europe's largest population, Russia is one of the region's smaller recorded-music markets.
- Russia has long been considered a recorded-music market with plenty of opportunities to generate revenue. However, a variety of problems have conspired to limit its potential.
- Since 2012, trade revenue from digital sales has been rising annually with the rate of growth heavily affected by shifting consumer preference for the different formats available. (Russia Music Industry Report, 2017)

Twenty-five years ago, construction began on the foundation of Russia's music industry. Up to that point, nothing resembling a proper music industry had formed under communist rule; music is ideology, and there was no room for competition on the other side of the Iron Curtain (Inside the Rise and Receding...,2015). Today, as Russia's particular form of capitalism reigns, ideology has returned to the entertainment industry, and has begun to play a major role in the country's music business and culture.

The dubious privatization deals of the mid-'90s, such as that of metals giants Norilsk Nickel, Novolipetsk Steel Plant, or oil and gas company Surgutneftegaz, helped many of those in orbit around the Kremlin's power base accumulate significant wealth and influence in the country (as long as they behave). The music industry was spared this cronyist privatization simply because there was nothing of much interest -- value -- for the country's burgeoning oligarch class to grab. (Inside the Rise and Receding...,2015). Under communism, the country had just one record label, Melodiya, which was strictly controlled by the government,

which made sure that only "safe" records and artists were released and promoted. FM radio simply didn't exist. Concerts were managed by state-run agencies, and rock musicians were mostly barred from touring. It would be charitable to characterize the last century of the Russian music industry as barebones.

That top-down, ideologically driven control of the culture industry in Russia began to change towards the end of the '80s, as the country began to open up its borders -- literally and figuratively -- in the wake of Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika reforms, which looked to introduce components of democracy without shedding too much of its entrenched communist ideology. Bands and artists -- until then relegated to underground shows in private apartments -- were eventually allowed to tour. Around the time of the country's dramatic shift, shows were normally promoted by officials of the youth communist organization, Komsomol, who had access to venues that organizers of underground shows lacked. Everything was controlled by the government, and no one from outside of Komsomol was allowed to organize events. In a miniature version of the country's privatization deals, Komsomol officials saw their access as a way to cash in, as elements of a market economy were gradually introduced.

In April 1990, the country's first privately held radio station, Europa Plus, went on the air. Around the same time, the first independent labels, such as SNC Records, were launched (Inside the Rise and Receding...,2015). By the time of the Soviet Union's collapse in late 1991, all that remained of the state-run music industry was a few vinyl pressing plants, businesses that would imminently become obsolete as the CD rose in popularity.

Over the next two decades, a music industry was allowed to mature with little or no government involvement, eventually growing to be worth \$2 billion annually by the early '10s, and which faced the same challenges as other, more mature markets, such as the continuing decline in physical sales and the question of growing streaming revenues. Over much of President Putin's rule, Russia has had differences with the West, but the relations soured precipitously in 2014, when the Maidan revolution in Ukraine, which toppled president Viktor Yanukovich, put Russia and the West at odds. The West welcomed what it saw as the overthrow of a corrupt regime, while Russia claimed the revolution was illegitimate and



brought to power a junta. Consequently, Russia annexed the Crimean peninsular region and provided support for pro-Russian rebels in East Ukraine. (Russia's Corrupt Music Industry..., 2017)

### **3.2 Copyright, Publishing and Record Deals**

Thinking about the state Russian music copyright field, publishing agencies and labels are currently at, amazing series come to mind – the “Get Down” and the “Vinyl”. According to the Internet Movie Database, *The Get Down* (2016-2017) is the disco-drama which focuses on the 70's of the United States music industry and *Vinyl* (2016) is the 1970s rock'n'roll drama (Imdb website, 2017). Both of these are revealing what's been going in the music industry and are retrospectives of what's been going on with the record labels in States decades ago, but the point is, according to Sandor Kozlov (2017) that we are on the same level:

“When it comes to the mentality of management, of course, there is a big difference because we have different traditions. For example, Russia or Hungary have club culture since 90s which means that this culture is only about 27 years old now. The countries in Western Europe have this culture from the 50s or even earlier. It was based on the club scene and the rock scene was also emerging on these subcultures, so that's a very big difference. The parents of generation that plays music right now – they never went clubbing, they only watched performances in so-called cultural houses or open-air festivals which had nothing to do with the club venues and the high-quality festivals we have now.

Approach to music is also different. In Western Europe, there's a very well established a system for authorization of rights, which is completely different here, in Russia. For instance, in Hungary you can register your songs in order for them to be played on the radio or TV, with the local copyright company, meaning, Hungarian musicians can get a cashback from a radio or TV broadcast even being a member of a very underground band. If you're playing in a venue with up to 200 people and, say, once or twice a year you're playing on the festival, 80 percent of the venues and every festival are paying the money to the organization and the organization gives it back to you” - Sandor Kozlov (2017)

The government has expressed an interest in exerting more control over copyright royalty collection, an area that it already controls by issuing accreditation to collecting societies. In late summer, the communications ministry came up with a proposal for drastic reform in the country's copyright royalty collection system (Russia' s Corrupt Music Industry..., 2017). The proposal accused the existing, state-accredited collecting societies - RAO for author's rights, VOIS for neighboring rights, and RSP, which collects a one-percent tax on imports of electronic devices that can be used for copying content -- of insufficient transparency. Incidentally, the three collecting societies announced a merger, just weeks before the government initiative which all three heavily criticized.

In the midst of the ensuing controversy, Andrey Krichevsky, RAO's deputy general director and head of Melodiya label, was attacked and beaten up in central Moscow. He suffered broken ribs, nose and cerebral trauma and still remains hospitalized. Most recently, police have opened a probe into RAO, on allegations that the organization embezzled 500 million rubles (\$7.4 million at the current exchange rate) (Russia' s Corrupt Music Industry..., 2017).

Over the last two and a half decades, Russia's music sector has gone a long way. Built from scratch, it made major steps to become part of the international music industry. But, most recently, it has been receding back into jingoism and walling itself off from the world. And, against that backdrop, a recent initiative of Russian legislators, under which 75 percent of all music on the air should be local, doesn't look surprising. According to *Inside the Rise and Receding...* (2015) published in *Billboard*, it is not yet clear if the initiative will be adopted, but if it will, the country's music sector will be set back even further. (*Inside the Rise and Receding...*2015)

### **3.3 Live Music Business: Touring, Festivals, Booking agency business**

Due to the lack of infrastructure (and lack of options in most cases) in Russia some people will prefer to save up some money to attend European festivals. A short trip to Europe might turn out even cheaper than coming to another Russian city, especially if you're not living in Moscow or Saint-Petersburg, the cities

where big annual festivals are usually held. The European festivals have better promo-companies, they have a long way built-up brand and the headliners are usually those who's been recently on European top-5, and got down to the stage straight from the billboards. (Inside the Rise and Receding...2015) Moreover, there're not so many festivals in Russia that could compete with European ones or worth attending at all, so, for those music-lovers who can afford traveling it's rather obvious. Those, who can't or don't feel like coming to Europe to see the newborn stars are rather satisfied with domestic options. In fact, there are some festivals which are currently developing and some are truly unique, those will be soon introduced in the details.

### **3.3.1 Russian Festivals**

#### **Nashestvie (Russian: Нашествие)**

One of the largest open-air Russian festivals. Was launched in the 1999 to celebrate the broadcast of Nashe Radio station for a year back then (Nashestvie official website, 2017). Nashe Radio station is in charge of Nashestvie festival ever since. It is annually held during the first weekend of July (until 2006: the first weekend of August), somewhere in the suburbs of Moscow, Russia; the festival became open-air since 2000 to this day except for 2007. Nashestvie changed the venues sever times and eventually ended up northwest to Tver region. Nashestvie offers a lot of camping spots or camping "towns" named after Moscow and Saint-Petersburg, and regardless of the weather forecast (for instance, the weekends in 2016 and 2017 it was raining hard), all of them are constantly and annually being filled with people (up to 200000 attendees). The success of Nashestvie can also be explained by the number of sponsors or partners they have. There are many international brands involved such as Volkswagen, Lipton, Lays, Tinkoff Bank, REN-TV channel. (Nashestvie official website, 2017)

Alongside with the music part of the festival, there are many other activities which are aiming for getting all of the 200000 together, to make them feel united and one whole, so for the festival weekend, there's an alternative kingdom with its own government is being built-up. Last year the chosen president became

Sergey Shnurov, a frontman of the Leningrad band, which is according to Sandor Kozlov is a good example of a band that became popular in Europe: “For example, Russian band Leningrad is successful in Europe not only because they have a big Russian community but also because lot of Germans go to Leningrad concerts, a lot of Hungarians go to Leningrad concerts. Their songs are being played on the radio even though they are not singing in English.”

The festival’s name is a word play in Russian: it literally means invasion (which is quite funny, bearing in mind political situation we’re currently in), but it also derived from the name of Nashe Radio (literally translated Our Radio). Media tends to call it “Russian Woodstock”. Nashestvie looks like it could easily be held somewhere in Europe, although the majority of bands playing there are predominantly Russian (some are from Ukraine and Belarus) and, their target audience, accordingly is Russian-speaking rock, punk and metal bands-lovers. Needs to be mentioned that bands, participating in Nashestvie are not being paid whatsoever, instead, the festival is used as a promotion tool for them, the additional promotion to being on air at Nashe Radio, since those two organizations have been going hand in hand for decades. (Nashestvie official website, 2017)



PICTURE3. “Russian Woodstock” (Photo: nashestvie.ru)

### **Afisha Picnic (Russian: Пикник Афиши)**

One of the oldest Russian one-day festivals, which is annually held on the territory of Kolomenskoye in Moscow. The festival was organized by Moscow-based Afisha company in 2005 and kept going ever since. The Afisha Picnic festival is expanding each year, attracting a wider audience from all over Russia, and more attention from both the local and foreign media. With the breadth and caliber of programming across music and leisure continually diversifying, and the introduction of English navigation in 2010, Afisha Picnic is also strengthening its presence on the international arena of live music and festival industry. In 2011, a full bilingual version of the Festival website has been introduced. (Afisha Picnic official website, 2017)

If the fans of Nashestvie is fond of punk, rock and heavy metal manufactured domestically, Afisha Picnic’s audience, in the opposite, focuses on international acts and alternative genres such indie pop-rock, indietronica, alternative rock, experimental music etc. Over the years, Afisha Picnic hosted tones of international major acts, solo musicians and bands, such as: Kasabian (UK), Foals (UK), Marina&theDiamonds (UK), The Wombats (UK), Peaches (USA), Courtney Love(USA), Editors (UK), Beirut (US), M83 (France), DeVotchKa (US), The Teenagers (France), Kaiser Chiefs(UK), These New Puritans (UK), Hercules and Love Affair (USA), Metronomy (UK), Blur (UK), Buzzcocks (UK), Pet Shop Boys (UK), Franz Ferdinand (SCT) and many more. (Afisha Picnic official website, 2017)

### **Park Live**

Park Live is an international music festival, which annually takes place in Moscow, Russia. The event was launched by Melnitsa booking agency in 2013. Park live is a relatively young event but this fact doesn’t stay in the way of Park Live’ popularity (25 to 30 thousands of attendees, according to the official website statistic). Festival becomes more and more successful each year and

attracts the audience by bringing in the greatest headliners, such as: The Killers (US), Limp Bizkit (US), Marilyn Manson(US), the Prodigy (UK), Poets of Fall (FIN), White Lies (UK) and long-expected Gorillaz(UK) are coming in 2018. (Park Live official website, 2017)

## **STEREOLETO**

Stereoieto is the very first independent international festival in Russia that's been going on annually for 16 years straight. It has become a unique Saint-Petersburg experience, a musical holiday both for the locals and city's guests. Technically speaking, it's the only major festival which is located anywhere but Moscow. Stereoieto is a pioneer among the open-air music festivals in Russia. In the last 6 years Stereoieto is located in historical park area on Elagin Island. In 2018, it was decided to change festival's venue and move it to the brand-new art space called ART PLAY in city center of St. Petersburg. Stereoieto managed to gain a sensational status of the foremost and the trendiest local summer event and it still remains the only event of its kind in the second largest city in Russia. Three event stages present a handpicked selection of the most interesting, fresh and forward thinking music. (Stereoieto, 2017)

Every year, Stereoieto team picks a special topic of the festival Stereoieto 2017 was dedicated to Viktor Tsoi, frontman of the famous Russian rock band Kino, who would turn 55 this year. Lots of original exhibitions, lectures and musical performances will be referred to that occurrence. This year, celebrating 100 years of Independence in Finland, Stereoieto introduces a special program Suomi100. It featured special themed events and a Quatro Stage Suomi100, where Finnish artists were exclusively performing. Within the participants there were famous dark-psychedelic-electro-rock trio from Helsinki K-X-P, which combined electronic, kraut-rock, noises and even folk songs and a former tram driver, the main Finnish indie-star (or at least this is how he's positioned on the official website of Stereoieto), Jakko Eino Kalevi, who now releases original hits made of a disco, house and techno mix on an iconic label Domino and other Finnish musicians. (Stereoieto, 2017)



Since 2002 and during its 16 years' history Stereoieto hosted many artists. International artists who performed in the past within the framework of the festival are for instance: Sigur Ros, Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds, Massive Attack, La Roux, Regina Spektor, U.N.K.L.E., Royksopp, Buena Vista Social Club, Jaga Jazzist, Kid Koala Air, Ladytron, Crystal Castles, Gus-Gus, General Elektriks, Future Sound Of London, Asian Dub Foundation, David Byrne, Morcheeba, Sparks, Sebastian Tellier, Ariel Pink's Haunted Graffiti, ORB, Gotan Project, Midnight Juggernauts, The Irrepressibles and many others. Aside from the world-famous artists Stereoieto also presents the most promising young Russian live acts to a big audience. (Stereoieto, 2017)



PICTURE 4. STEREOIETO 2017. (Photo: Diana Zaytseva)

### **BOL' (Russian: Болъ)**

Bol', translated from Russian as “pain” is the youngest Moscow based festival, main focus of which is the very underground Russian scene, organized by Connected agency (the same organization that manages Moscow Music Week conference and showcase-festival). Since the festival doesn't have a website or any relatively useful information on its public page on the platform V Kontakte, you can't say for sure how long the festival has been held for, the estimate would

be up to 3 years. Bolʼ used to be a daily festival, but there are rumors it’s going to be held for two days in 2018. Line-up of the festival mainly consists of exponents of so-called in media “new Russian wave”. There are sometimes some of the international bands pop into the line-up randomly, but those are rather underground, too. Funny to say, but compared to its “big brothers” with massive audience and major line-ups, it’s the only Russian festival written about in international media (e.x. Dazed, Vice, Swedish Hymn, etc.), that’s how empowering networking skills of event-manager can be!

According to the online zine Dazed, that had a chat with the organizer of Bolʼ festival, Stefan Kazaryan, Bolʼ and artists invited to play there are positioned as a remedy of flourishing rave Moscow’s scene. The atmosphere here is completely different: as opposed to serious globalist hedonism of techno movement, there’s rude and in most cases poorly rhymed lyrics in Russian spilled over drums and regular guitar chords. Bolʼ can’t be fully described as a rock festival, since it’s a mix of new wave, grunge, post-punk, rap and hip-hop alongside with innovative electronic music. “Bolʼ is much more about attitude than genres,”- Stefan Kazaryan (2017) states.

Bolʼ generally is about self-irony and honesty, it doesn’t approve hypocrisy in either music or in life, it’s about 8 unstoppable hours of live performances and doesn’t care about the rest. You can be an old smelly tattooed rocker, an intellectual pop singer with glitter all over your body and face or an underground rapper who prefers to perform naked – Bolʼ is fine with whatever. “We’re fine with whatever” – this is the motto of Bolʼ festival, and even though it doesn’t pay itself out whatsoever, so far, it’s the only festival in Russia which you as an artist don’t have to be afraid applying to perform at. (Dazed, 2017)





PICTURE 5. Bolb festival. (Photo: <https://vk.com/bolbfest>)

There is another phenomenon which needs to be mentioned in this paragraph: every once in a while, a group of promoters and event managers (those usually in charge of bringing artists from abroad) gather together into event agency of sorts to book several artists collectively. They call it “festival”, although It’s more of a pop-up event with the only one stage which doesn’t require a long-term build-up and is being teared down usually straight away after the show is over. They come up with loud names for such festivals, but those never became annual, so, obviously, this is just a formality and another try to earn money on the artists, since chances that people will come to see their three favorite bands instead of one for a relatively low price of 2000rur-3000rur (30-40eu per ticket, accordingly) are much higher than if the ticket price for one artist would cost the same – it would be considered a fortune and two of three times less people would show up. So, basically, it’s nothing more than a smart marketing move, a one-time act, which obviously doesn’t fall under the category of the festival in its full, since they are not constantly active and therefore are useless for young musicians in order for the, to breakthrough, this is why those are not mentioned the list above. (Russia Beyond, 2014)

The majority of festivals in Russia are focused on making money by the ticket sales, not on promoting young and promising musicians, and at the very same time, there are no labels or agencies with a huge promotional background in Russia who would take of those youngsters, analogously to the European agencies according to Sandor Kozlov (2017):

“If you are a big label or a big agency, for instance, you have Sia. There’s a festival that says could I book Sia from your roster? And you say: “Ok, yes, of course, it costs 300000 euros (although I think she’s worth half a million actually), deal, but could you also book three of my artists alongside with her?” And the festival will have to book three other artists from this agency and suddenly the festival sees its own roster being filled up with the additional acts. And if you’re not anyhow related to the agency, you just have no chance.” (Kozlov, 2017). That is, plainly speaking, the reason why the same big headliners still remain top-popular in Russia, and unless every aspect of Russia music industry globally changes, this pattern, that has been kept over years, seems to be rather tough, if not to say impossible, to break.

All of the festivals listed above are not really meant to promote (meaning, purposefully, voluntarily promotion) and to help boosting band-beginners’ careers forward. Nashestvie is one exception but to perform there you have to really fit into the format which for the most youngster on stage who are eager to experiment with the sound and are not really fond of plain “pop/rock/punk” labeling is not an option. So far, low-budget events might take interest with more enthusiasm in letting a beginner to perform, and create the new medium which gives more realistic prospects for a young musician to get on board.

There is an awful lot of so-called festivals, created by the owners of music public pages based on V Kontakte platform, which don’t have their own website and their audience is mainly consist of their followers on the social media. One of those is called Motherland, which started off as a daily updated music blog and then became a small festival with underground line-up of predominantly Moscow based guitar bands and electronic musicians, alongside with small number of regional bands. Bol’ began its path pretty much the same way, but with the help of social media and Afisha magazine, mentioned earlier, it managed to level up

(Public page of festival Bol' VKontakte, 2017). So, the only point to attend those so-called festivals is to label yourself «underground» and sign off on the lack of professionalism.

### **3.3.2 Touring in Russia**

But back to the bright side of being a Russian musician eventually. Touring is always lots of fun, because the ability to tour meaning, in most cases, that you have fans who love you and would love to see you perform! So, before a musician is invited to his or her first festival, but after building up a fan base in regions of some sort, they have to make a lot of effort by touring individually. Usually, with the help of regional promoters, they map out a small tour and play in the regional bars or clubs.

Club gigs are essential for any baby act in order to find and build up the audience alongside with making connections in music industry. Obviously, club gigs give a great opportunity for mastering live performance skills and collecting experiences. A lot of solo musicians or bands use live shows in clubs as a way for earning their living on a regular basis. Back in a day club venues were well-known for being a flagship to showcase new artists or to establish new trends like, for instance, punk music that was established in the 1970s in the clubs of the UK (and since it's discovered, that Russian industry is stuck somewhere at the 70s, club or pub gigs seem to be a perfect fit for a Russian musician to begin with!). While club venues are mainly located in big cities and capitals, pubs generally take on the same role for small towns in a countryside. (Shuker 2012, 48-49.)

Popular thinking is that every club is equipped with lighting and sound systems and even fully armed with lightning engineers in charge of light design during the show and sound in-house technicians always ready to help a band if anything. Most probably there are a lot of clubs like that but definitely not every venue beginner act plays at can provide at least one third of above-listed on its own cost and expense. Sandor Kozlov (2017), speaking of touring in Europe mentions "...a lot of venues here don't have backlines, drum sets or amplifiers, which need to be ordered and cost quite a lot. If it's a small Russian artist, venue won't take

responsibility to pay for his needs, so the Russian band has to rent out the gear themselves” (Kozlov, 2017). The same might happen in the middle of Russia, in any regional small town. Sure thing, the fees for ordering a backline are incomparably lower than if the same were to accidentally happen in Europe, but it’s always a good thing to bear in mind force-majors of such kind.

There are several stage types in the clubs that usually differ size-wise from small to large; the capacity of club venues also differs size-wise: small (only standing), medium (some tables filled) and large (seating of the club to the fullest extent). Club shows usually start in the evening, where doors open at about 8pm, or later at night, where doors open at 11pm. Playing time usually influences the age limit of the audience, evening gigs allow to pass everyone who is over 16 years old, night gigs are meant for the audience which is usually over 18, although there always might be some exceptions. (Goldstein 2008, 201.)

If the artist keeps on touring on their own – it may make them spotted in a way, chances to get in the line-up of the festivals are much higher when the artist have already maintained at least one successful tour and keep on being active (meaning, taking care of their career).



PICTURE 6, Moscow based band the Lazies before their club gig at Ionoteka in Saint-Petersburg. (Photo: Anna Pridanova)

### 3.3.3 Booking agencies and Music management

In Russia, they might call themselves booking agencies, publishing companies, record labels, or promoters, but technically they share the same responsibilities. Interesting fact, there are so-called “producer centers” in Russia which are in charge of promotion of the artists and have nothing to do with actual music production: recording, mixing or mastering. They are what is sometimes called “talent-seekers” or bookers. So, every time people in Russia hear a word “producer”, the image of a wealthy business man comes to mind, whose job is to seek for and light up a new star on the domestic stage. (Inside the Rise and Receding...2015)

The roots of this phenomenon are also deep down back in 90s, where exclusively rich people could afford anything, including, putting their wives with no voice or talents whatsoever on stage and make the entire country listen to their so-called singing, which is if you think of it precisely, just scary. It also happens due to the lack of proper music education and, in some cases, due to the poor translation, which in 2017 also sounds like a teenage excuse for dummies, since, come on, we’re living in the digital era. (This Deal Will Change Everything for The Music Business in Russia, 2016)

There is usually one person who takes responsibility on managing the artist, promoting the artist, booking the gigs for the artist, working as record label and a producer in its true meaning, etc. and of course it has a negative influence on the results. Crews, that are obvious for every European who is somewhat related to working in music business are awfully rare, since it’s the total DIY on the scale of Russian industry. There are some legitimate booking agencies that are officially in charge of booking the major artists. I’d say, those might be the major agencies, since they are heard of. But then again, by major I mean the companies which at least somewhat fall under the definition of “booking agencies” in its original expression. But with the current state of affairs, it’s impossible to earn the living by exclusively booking artists, so nearly every each one of those working as a booking agent are also work as club promoters or manage several

bands on a regular basis. (This Deal Will Change Everything for The Music Business in Russia, 2016)

Whatever those are called, usually there are people who still might have the power to boost your career, because they are working in the music industry, no matter how corrupted and badly developed it is. Let's call them "entertainment buyers" or "industry contacts" or "media contacts" since that is why they really are.

Obviously, if they are not so many professionals in music industry, they are worth its weight in gold, and every musician sees it as his or her duty to send their promo kits those few. According to Sandor Kozlov (2017): «When I was working in the club, I got an average of 20 bands a day asking me to check out their music. Of course, I didn't listen to all the music I received. For example (and it's a good example!) the band sends me PDF file with their bio, video links and promo pictures. If I see the photo of the band I almost already know what they play. And if it's a bad photo I can always tell for sure that this particular band isn't a professional one, and maybe I even skip listening to their music since I have a lot of other musicians to listen to» (Kozlov, 2017), so it is important for beginner band to make a professional promo-kit. In order to do that, it's better to follow the simple rules, according to Spellman (2008):

- *High-quality pictures.* When the e-mail is opened, chances are the photo will be the first thing to catch the eye. Go for quality. Hire a professional photographer who does his job well and who shares your and your band's values, in order to make a perfect photoshoot. It helps a lot to get an input from people you respect before choosing the photo for your kit.
- *High-quality logo.* Logos provide the first direct contact with your act's image.
- *Demo records.* Your demo should contain no more than three tunes with you best one up front. If you decided to send your full-length album, then let the recipient know which tracks to play.
- *Cover letter.* Here's the personal touch. A sincere individual letter works better than a form letter. Introduce yourself and your act. Be concise and make it professional (grammatically correct and polite).

- *Artist's Bio.* Give a brief history of the act and what the near future holds. The bio should be short (no longer than one word page), neat, and professionally written. It should reflect your musical identity, originality and style of music. While its content should be true, you should present yourself as a likely candidate for success. Don't lie, but don't be afraid to exaggerate a bit either, because the people reading your promo kit will assume you did anyway. Since you want to be able to use the same bio over and over again, don't date or link it to any particular record release. By all means, drop names.
- *Gig schedule.* This lets people know you're getting around and where they can catch your act. Complementary to this is a "Where we've been" list, telling them where you've played – kind of a musical employment record.
- *Radio and Press quotes.* Once you have a new release, you can sell it around to music media for review. In case you get good reviews, you can pull the quotes from the review and then use them for further promotion, in order to lend your act additional credibility.
- *Song list (additional).* If you're sending your kit to an agent or some event agency that focuses precisely on organizing private parties, and you do some covers as well as originals, it's a good idea to send a song list. Well-selected covers go a long way towards getting you work, especially at private or themed parties.
- *Video.* The last but definitely not the list, keeping in mind the popularity of YouTube. A picture is worth a thousand words. But before attaching your video links to the e-mail, make sure you have a standout product. If you want to use your video for simply making your act more attractive, then a low-budget shoot of your live performance or in-studio will do. But then again, go for the quality! (Spellman, 2008)

### 3.4 Music and Social media in Music business

Alongside with YouTube, Soundcloud and Facebook, social media used for online promotion worldwide, the most popular one in Russia is VK or VKontakte (Rise and Receding...2015). According to Andraz Kazier (2017): "Having 50 followers on Facebook means you're just not interested in developing your music career or you're not interesting to your audience as a musician... or you might

have a VK page and that's definitely a difference between Russian and European acts." (Kazier, 2017). Although, the number of channels you have isn't that important: you'd better have one but regularly updated in order for your fans to keep up with what's going on with your life and your music. Depending on the story of your built-up brand, you might either share the personal stuff in your public page, or not. Whatever digital image you've chosen for yourself or for your band, it is essential to adhere to a schedule, in order to market your music properly. By schedule, I mean a marketing plan. The role of social media is huge for branding. Although the etiquette for daily posting may vary from one media platform to another. For instance, Facebook should be updated once a day, twitter – 2-3 times a day and YouTube channel should be updated at least once a month. Don't forget Instagram, which, after joining Facebook corporation, has over the years become one of the greatest tools for the promotion.

Keeping in mind DIY situation, there's no urge to spend much money on the marketing. There are plenty of ways to market a band for free. Although there are some great SMM-companies that are focused exactly on promotion of your brand through the media platforms, but I believe it only makes sense to hire the professionals when you realize you can't keep up by yourself. Anyway, budgets in music marketing are not that big, so for that purpose it would be smart to raise up the money via crowdfunding platforms. One of the really useful tools is often offered by the social majors is paid ads or boosted posts. For instance, Facebook has a boosting option offer for symbolic price up to 15-20\$ a day.

According to Chertkow & Feehan (2012), the last but not the least part of the marketing plan is the agenda. A well-planned schedule is essential if you're aiming for the success. It helps to track the progress to make sure none of the important details will slip unnoticed and keeps your business in order. As an example, there's a schedule oriented on properly marketing the upcoming release:

- **Two months before the release:** make sure your copyrights are secure and you rounded up as many people as possible to your socials.
- **One month before the official release** – is a right time to tease your fans by releasing a single or a few. About that time the date of the release event



should be announced and press campaign is eventually ready to begin. Starting a pre-sale campaign also might be a good idea.

- **Two weeks before Release** – go nuts with countdown, posting on every social network you're in charge of should be increased to one or two updates a day. The band should be continually playing local or starting the tour supporting the new release.
- **Release Day** requires all the socials you maintain to be updated with OUT now post and images with links to purchase the masterpiece. (Chertkow & Feehan 2012, 42-58)

### 3.5 Networks in Music Business

Networking is also relatively new and a strange thing for a Russian musician. Russians are so not used to it. If they make relationship, they do it unconsciously, not on purpose. It's just in a back of most Russian people's heads: it's wrong to use relationship in order to become successful at work (Kimpel 2005, 34). If networking in order to get a promotion or get spotted, one might as well be claimed a kiss-ass by his or her fellow-musicians. The system tends to be changing lately, but there still remain people whose prejudice or insecurities holds them back big time, especially that's the case in the music industry, since your career depends directly on your music industry contacts. (This Deal Will Change Everything for The Music Business in Russia, 2016)

Good news is that networking skills might be (and should be) easily developed since your social attitude at most times is the good reason you become big. Even though the digital revolution enables connections, there's still nothing like face-to-face contact and unless you have a personal manager who would do that for you, you should learn the art of networking yourself, and there are rather plenty simple ways of doing it, according to Spellman (2008):

- *Become involved in a scene.* Whether it's a musical genre or a political movement (although I, personally, against the latter), immersing yourself in a particular musical community will enable you to meet and become known to others.

- *Go to clubs and musical event.* A show is a magnet for different people working in a genre/community. Other people at the show will have similar interests and goals to your own, so you can easily get to know them.
- *Ask Questions.* People love to talk about themselves and their work. Expressing a common interest will create a bond.
- *Don't always try and meet the head of the company.* You're more likely to strike a friendship with a peer who works in the company who may later on call when they hear of an opportunity to hop on.
- *Attend local and international showcase festivals.* They offer a wealth of opportunities to meet and mingle with people working in all areas of the industry.
- *Give and get business cards (or share your Facebook or VKontakte pages).* Most people keep the business cards they collect and will know where to find you when the time comes. Keep a record of those you give cards to so you can send them updates when they occur.
- *Follow up.* When you are given a business card, or make an expression with someone in a position to help/hire you, follow up the meeting with an email and your "winning promo-kit". (Spellman 2008, 76-79)

These are just a few of the ways one can network and increase one's music business contacts.

Another issue that might stand in a way of a good networking is the fear of being generally misunderstood or seeming less professional than one really is. Some also consider their music to be "ordinary" and might be dreaded of a feedback. In order to break the common misconception, I would love to provide the results of the research that proves that definition of "ordinary" is a rather subjective matter.

Comment from Andraz Kazier (2017): "If you're a DIY musician I'd first recommend getting yourself educated a bit about the way things work and what's what. Maybe visiting a few events without playing there... and then try out smaller events. Of course, connections can move you forward, even if your music is rather ordinary... Why? Because one - what's ordinary is subjective and in my subjective opinion there's a lot of audience for "ordinary music" and two -

because that's how it is pretty much everywhere in life. BUT and that's BUT with CAPS LOCK - only the great will stay". (Kazier, 2017)

"I think no matter if the music is ordinary (or nothing special) or not, networking is important. The music itself doesn't have to be it all" – says Christoffer Gunnarsson. (Gunnarsson, 2017)

"Depends on how you define „ordinary". If you mean mainstream, no prob. There's always room for that. I would put it this way: if you're original in some kind of way, good chances. If you happen to tend to a genre that's very hyped in the very moment, you'll have many-many competitors in the same „field", thus less chances to get noticed if you're, say, one of 10 bands trying to be a „me too" of a currently popular genre" -- Martin Lippert. (Lippert, 2017)

Aron Lukazc (2017) says: "Let's say we start from the point that the musician creates something unique, interesting and valuable. This is basic stuff. Everything comes after this. If you're a good artist, then there is the basis to build on that. The next step is networking, getting to know professionals in the industry and getting known". (Lukasz, 2017)

### **3.6 Digital distribution, downloading, streaming**

The persistent issue of piracy -- which is still, 16 years after the original Napster's closure, a focus for the American industry -- was more acute in Russia than in some other markets. This was, most notably, due to VK or VKontakte, and Russia's largest social networking website, considered by the industry at large to be a global-scale threat. On May 1, 2015, new amendments to Russia's copyright law came into effect, extending copyright protection measures, previously applied only to videos, to music tracks as well, part of an effort by the government over the past several years to crack down on the country's online pirates. The amendments simplified the procedure for rights holders to request the blocking of infringing websites, removing the previous requirement that a court ruling be secured. While the government has presented the amendments as a breakthrough in the fight against online piracy, but rights holders remain unconvinced.

"We haven't seen a substantial decrease in the number of pirate online music services, which don't pay royalties to rights holders, and their audience isn't contracting either," said Yandex.Music's Vorontsov. "On pirated web sites, you can still find almost any music, listen to it online and download." (Digital Music News, 2017)

Illegitimate websites may remain undeterred, but the tightening of the copyright law has, at a minimum, pushed legitimate companies involved in dubious practices to clean up their act. VKontakte recently signed a goodwill agreement with Sony Music Russia following lawsuits filed by Sony alongside Universal Music Russia & Warner Music UK. For years, rights holders have been complaining about VKontakte's music service, which allows users to upload music tracks that then become available for streaming (and, thanks to some applications, for download). VKontakte's boilerplate response has been to say it is willing to quickly remove any illegitimate material at a rights holder's request -- but that has no control over user-generated content. Most recently, though, VKontakte has been reportedly working with rights holders on the creation of a legitimate music service. (Inside the Rise...2015)

Another thing which requires to be paid attention to – there's no Spotify broadcasting in Russia, although it recently launched even in Japan (which is relatively further to Europe than Russia). Obviously, there are plenty reasons for that – political (Russian copyright law is against company's ideology) and economic (due to widespread piracy that might lead to the sunk costs). (Digital Music News, 2017). Another reason, which pretty much sums up the matters above, might be that the very first link which pops up in google when you type in "Spotify in Russia" is the article named "It's Really This Easy to Stream Spotify in Russia", but this is only a guess. (It's Really This Easy...,2016)

Back in a day, there was a rumor that Spotify, which closed its Russian office in 2015 and canceled plans to launch in the country, may be reconsidering its strategy in the country. The report quotes several unnamed sources at Russian labels and media companies as saying that Spotify is mulling a second attempt to launch in Russia, taking into account the large size of the market and its

significant potential for growth. A spokesperson for Spotify declined to comment on the report. (Spotify Revisiting...2016)

In 2014, Spotify registered a Russian company, which still shows as active in the SPARK-Interfax data base (It's Really This Easy...,2016), and spent most part of the year preparing for launch, tentatively scheduled for the first half of 2015. However, in February 2015, the company backed off, closed the local office and fired its head Alexander Kubaneishvili. (It's Really This Easy...,2016) The company did not explain its reasons for the move, but the Russian news service RBC quoted a source close to Spotify as saying that the main reasons for canceling the Russian launch were the slumping economy and a new personal-data law, which was to come into effect in Russia on September. 1, 2015. (Inside the Rise...2015)

Under the law, Russians' personal data have to be stored in Russia only, and Spotify, as a cloud service, reportedly was not sure how to comply with the regulation. Meanwhile, according, to Digital Music News (2017), Russia's digital music market defied expectations and grew by 11 percent to \$30.4 million in 2017. (Digital Music News, 2017)

The main players in Russia's streaming segment are Apple Music, the ailing Australian company Guvera and local services Yandex.Music, a division of the "Russian Google," Yandex, and Zvooq, backed by the retailer Ulmart. (Spotify Revisiting...2016)

## 4 MOSCOW MUSIC WEEK

### 4.1 Moscow Music Week case

Moscow Music Week (picture7) is positioned to be the one and the only showcase festival in Russia. According to the announcement published on the Moscow Music Week website: Moscow Music Week 2017 – International Music Conference/Showcase Festival that will take place in Moscow, 7-10th of September, 2017. Moscow Music Week 2017 will get together music industry professionals from Eastern and Western Europe, Asia, USA and Russia! Conference programme for MMW2017 will consist of lectures, workshops and panel discussions. Versatile line-up of over 100 Russian and International acts will unfold Moscow's best concert venues within the Showcase Festival programme. 4 4 days, 120 artists, 30 showcases, 40 skilled speakers from all around the world and many more.



PICTURE 7. Moscow Music Week 2017. Poster.

## 4.2 Conferences and workshops: up-to-date topics in Russian Music Business

The conference part of Moscow Music Week usually consists of a series of panels, lectures and workshops concerning vital topics for international and local music industry. In order to point out how international the event is, there is also the list of international and local delegates.

In a year 2017, the hotly debated topics at the conference were:

- **Why do Moscow venues disappear?**

Host: Pavel Kamakin (16 Tonns, Moscow)

Speakers: Andrey Algoritmik (Powerhouse, Moscow), Oksana Bocharova (China-Town, Moscow), Igor Tonkikh (Yotaspaces, Moscow), Igor Sukhov (Sady Babilona)

Over the past year more than 10 Moscow venues have been closed due to various reasons. What decisions and events lead to this? How do clubs survive in harsh economic conditions? How to keep a club going and reaching business goals?

- **The role of brands in music culture**

Speakers: Nairi Simonyan (Main in Main, Synthposium), Kirill Bondarenko (ex-adidas), Vasily Volchok (Volchok clothing), Oleg Scherbin (Fred Perry) and other

Just recently we thought that any artist who took part in an ad was a sort of a sell-out. Yet, today many young artists seek for support from brands and brands look for musicians who are “on the same wave” with their business philosophy. Together they arrange tours and campaigns, advocate for timeless values, build loyal fan base... or do they?

- **Andrey Stebunov: Development strategy of an artist’s channel on YouTube (lecture)**

Andrey Stebunov is the head of the YouTube affiliate program in the music and sports categories in Russia and the CIS.

Every day millions of users come to YouTube in search of their favorite and new music. In this case, the behavior of users on YouTube is significantly different

from other music services: the diversity of content and the possibility of the service leaves its imprint. In his lecture Andrey Stebunov will talk about ways for musicians to use the functions of the service effectively, interact with the audience and be successful on YouTube.

- **What you need to know about making shows in Russian regions**

Speakers: Boris Eltaomtsev (Zvezda club, Samara), Semyon Galperin (Tele-Club, Yekaterinburg), Alexander Norets, Alexander Yakovlev, Sergey Shaiduko and other

How does the current economic situation affect concert business in the regions? How to competently build the logistics of a regional concert tour, taking into account the features of the market, the audience and the mechanisms for promoting concerts? Under what conditions do clubs and promoters work with bands? We compare the organization of concerts in Moscow and St. Petersburg with a regional one, to find out who is winning – local promoters or metropolitan.

- **What can indie-labels offer artists today: chasing the tangible medium**

Speakers: Gleb Raumskaya (Hyperboloid Records), Igor Adams (Abstrasension Records), Gleb Lisichkin (Kometa Music), Alexander Xuman (Xuman Records) and other

Host: Andrey Algoritmik (Semikols Record Pressing)

What are labels more interested in – working 360 or publishing? If they make a physical release – which medium, for whom and why? How do the processes of copyright registration and promotion work today? And, of course, how does one release an album on vinyl and doesn't bankrupt immediately.

- **Streaming services and artist's revenue**

Speakers: Olga Moldavskaya (The Orchard, Russia), Dmitry Seregin (Russian Digital Sound/ Red Duck Music), Garry Gorelov (Pompeya band manager, 16 Tonns marketing director, Russia), Vera Gorbulenko (marketing director for United media Agency, Russia), Oleg Rozov (Senior Client & Marketing Manager, Russia & Ukraine, The Orchard) and other

It is widely believed that streaming services work with musicians under extremely unprofitable conditions. Is it so? Why do some artists manage to get real revenue from digital sales? How and where should you place your tracks to



earn money on this? The final price or pay-what-you-want? How to use each platform to the maximum?

- **How to promote your band in Russian socials. Part 1.**

Do social networks still play an important role today in promoting bands? The question that many musicians have asked over the past few years, and finally within the framework of the Moscow Music Week, the underground kings of the band “пacoш” and the brightest duet of the local scene “Electroforez” will tell how they manage to build relationships with the audience and why their posts in social networks cause such excitement among fans.

- **Alexander Ionov and his story of an American citizen moving to Saint-Peterburg and creating an underground music empire**

A speech from an iconic promoter (picture8), the creator behind IONOSFEAR events and the already legendary Saint Petersburg club “Ionoteka”

- **MENT Festival case study**

Speakers: Andraž Kajzer, Matjaž Manček (MENT Ljubljana, Slovenia)

Over the three years of its existence, MENT has become one of the most interesting hubs in the musical life of Eastern Europe. Precise management and true passion gave fruit: this spring the festival was visited by 3,400 people, more than 420 delegates and more than 60 music projects performed at showcases. The managers and bookers of the festival will talk about the problems and findings along the way, and also share their views and plans for the future.

- **How to pitch and establish yourself within showcase-festivals**

Speakers: Michał Hajduk (Adam Mickiewicz Institute, Poland), Christoph Borkowsky (WOMEX, Piranha Records etc., Germany), Andraž Kajzer (MENT Ljubljana, Slovenia), Sandor Kozlov (Attaché on culture of Hungary, former promoter, manager of music scenes of Sziget festival), Radek Chudzio (Fource Entertainment, Poland), Miriam Brenner (Kokako Music, Netherlands)

You’ve got mail – an invitation to a showcase-festival. How are these festivals different from huge pop-events? How does one manage their time, make new connections and use all the opportunities to boost their band’s career? Why

networking, attending panels and finding the right way to present oneself is so valuable – firsthand.

- **Music in Sync**

Speakers: Denis Dubovik (music supervisor for TNT tv-channel), Renato Horvath (Budapest Showcase Hub, Hungary), Denis Sharko (Sync Lab), Alexander Sokolov (I am waiting for you last summer) and other.

In recent years, music placement in serials, films, games and advertising has become one of the most tempting ways to earn money for musicians and copyright owners of their music. In theory, synchronization seems to be a very understandable mechanism, but how does it work in practice? How do relations between investors, agencies, labels and musicians work and what are the forms of cooperation? How to be noticed by synchronization agencies, set a fair price for the product and not make mistakes.

- **How to get into a major festival's line-up**

Host: Vasily Zorkiy (Picnic Afisha, Russia)

Speakers: Ilia Kusnirovich (Bosco Fresh Fest, Russia), Sandor Kozlov (ex-Sziget, Hungary), Francis de Souza (Earth Beat, Netherlands), Monika Satkova (Pohoda, Slovakia)

Is it possible to get into a major festival's lineup by sending applications? What steps should a band take to be in for a spot in a lineup? Who chooses bands for big festivals and how?

- **Ticket sellers: soulless sharks or artist's allies on the way to success**

Speakers: Mikhail Minin (CEO Ponominalu ticketing service), Olga Vereschagina (Timepad ticketing service), Artyom Dertev (club promoter, manager for Obe Dve band, founder SAHAR 7), Vojta Otevrel (Go Out ticketing service, Czech Republic)

On what terms does the ticket market work? What can it offer to clubs and musicians in addition to the online platform? How does one use ticketing strategies?

- **How to promote your band in Russian social network. Part 2.**

Do social networks still play an important role today in promoting bands? The question that many musicians have asked over the past few years, and finally within the framework of the Moscow Music Week, the underground kings of the band “nacomm” and the brightest duet of the local scene “Electroforez” will tell how they manage to build relationships with the audience and why their posts in social networks cause such excitement among fans.

- **Tallinn Music Week Q & A**

Speaker: Helen Sildna (head of Tallinn Music Week)

Next year Tallinn Music Week will celebrate its 10th anniversary. Starting as a small showcase festival and a conference in support of regional culture, TMW has gradually grown into a week-long event that brings together over 250 artists, 1,000 delegates and several thousand visitors from all over the world. How Tallinn Music Week has turned into one of the most important European events that celebrate multiculturalism, equality, and cultural innovation – from the perspective of the festival’s head Helen Sildna.

- **How to become of interest for International media and promoters**

Host: Magdalena Jensen (Chimes, CEO)

Speakers: Sean Bouchard (Talitres record label, France), Sergey Saburov (Hyperboloid Records, Russia), Christoffer Gunnarsson (Klubb Kalabalik festival, Sweden), Marcin ‘groh’ Groskiewicz (U Know Me Records, Poland) and other

Self-promotion is as important for a musician today as creative process itself. How to “pack” your music and present it to promoters and media – from press-kit to first interviews – in this discussion.

- **Selling out gigs**

Speakers: Radek Chudzio (Fource Entertainment, Poland), Garry Gorelov (Pompeya band manager, 16 Tonns marketing director, Russia), Paivi Lopponen (Savoy Teatteri, Finland), Yana Kalimulina (Pushing Stone, Russia)

Without promotion, it is impossible to exist in the music and concert business. What are the best marketing strategies and how do we make them work? Which tools of promotion are dying today, and which are gaining momentum? How

much time do you need to promote a gig and how to properly identify the target audience?

- **Scandalous articles and black PR in independent music journalism: tools to boost your popularity or the way to the degradation of media?**

Speakers: Nikolay Red'kin (The Flow, Russia), Philipp Mironov (Afisha, Russia), Martin Lippert (journalist, Germany), Ingrid Kohtla (Tallinn Music Week, Estonia), Grisha Prorokov (journalist, Russia)

In a struggle to be on the surface of the media flow – are all methods equally good? How do we tell the difference between a good PR campaign and low-grade black PR? How does the choice of promotion tools affect the popularity and sales of the artist? And is there a good alternative to a well-promoted scandal?

- **East-European festivals: major regional festivals or a launching-pad to take over Europe**

Host: Matjaž Manček (Center urbane kulture Kino Šiška, MENT festival, Slovenia)

Speakers: Helen Sildna (Tallinn Music Week, Estonia), Renato Horvath (Budapest Showcase Hub, Hungary), Monika Satkova (Pohoda Festival, Slovakia), Aron Lukasz (Bánkitó Festival, Hungary)

In a bipolar world, it is easy to overlook the development of regional cultural hubs. Meanwhile, Eastern European festivals have long earned a reputation of exciting and outstanding cultural events, not inferior to the giants of Central and Western Europe. Have they become full-fledged players of the European music industry or are they still a stepping stone on the way?



PICTURE 8. Alexander Ionov at his workshop within conference programme of Moscow Music Week 2017. (Photo: Shirobokova Alexandra)

## 5 CONCLUSION

It can't be denied: music in Russia is not only about numbers, but also, economic system of the country. Music industry in Russia is inseparably tied to the Russian economy and politics, and unless something drastically changes politic or economic-wise, Russian music industry is, plainly put, doomed.

Musicians in general have no idea about copyright as such. They don't quite understand how it works. Let alone musicians, sometimes the head of music festivals or so-called booking agencies have zero information regarding copyrights. There are very few layers in Russian music business, who could take care of copyrights or licensing.

This is coming from the lack of proper music education, and I'm not talking about conservatories or another old-school traditional music colleges, since Russian opera and ballet schools are considered to be the best in the world. I'm talking about legit music colleges with modern technologies and good equipment. I'm talking about music business studies, which, in my opinion, should be mandatory for those, who considers working in the industry. Of course, some of those could study abroad, like I did. But not everyone even in Moscow, let alone the regions could afford studying in Europe, and even if they can, they don't feel like getting back to Russia in order to die, building the industry from the scratch and fighting the corrupt system over and over again.

Actually, the same pattern "building from the scratch", comes to mind, when I think of Moscow Music Week case. Pre-production of Moscow Music Week 2017 has started one month prior to the event announced dates, which is, unacceptable, irresponsible and what's more importantly points to incompetence and amateurishness of its creators. Being a part of Moscow Music Week team on the state of pre-production and production gives me, I suppose, at liberty to objectively describe the way it went.

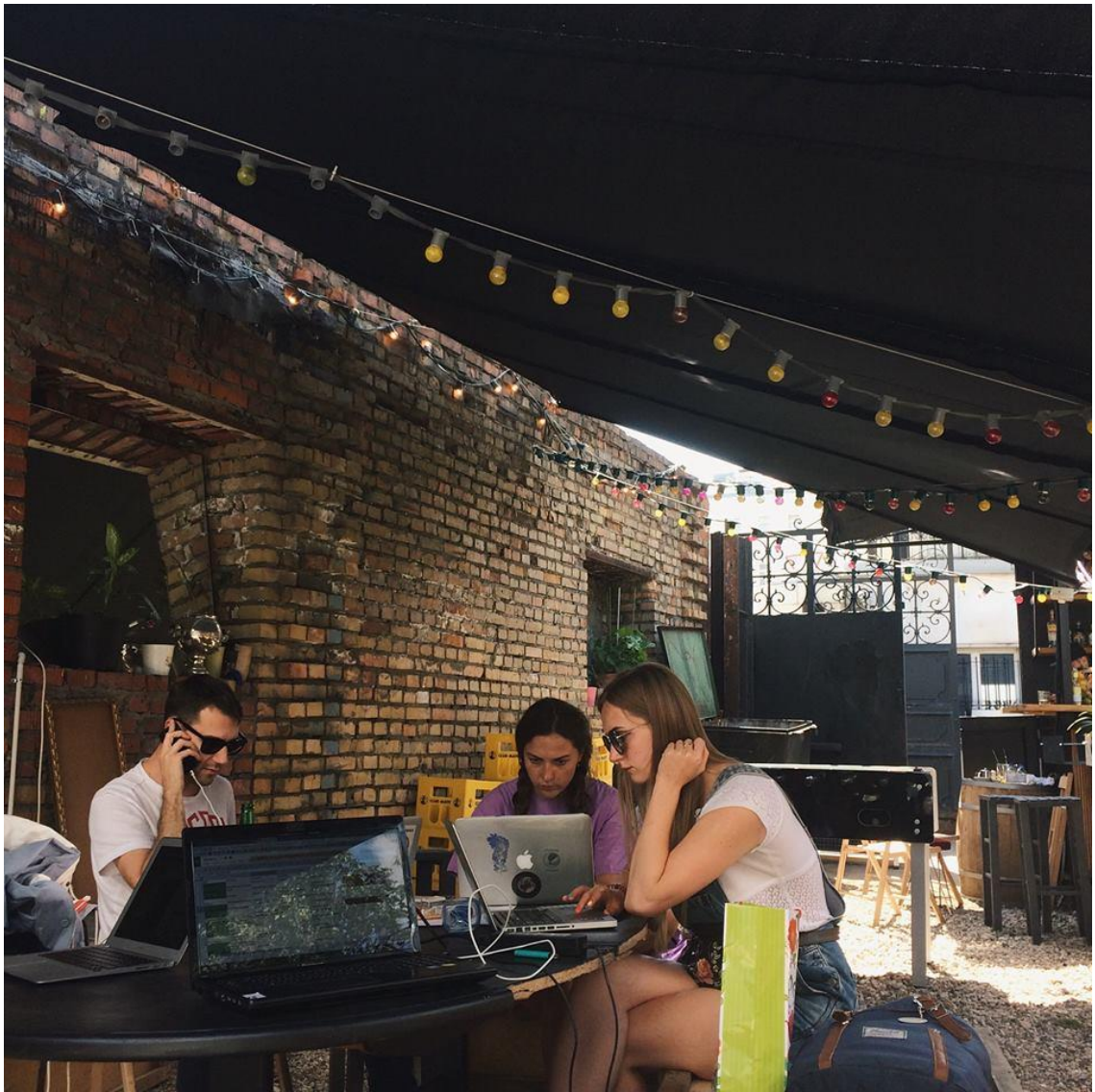
Chosen topics for the conferences were great and highly informative. A good grasp of useful information one could absorb and therefore challenge oneself to be better at the areas he or she interested in. But then again, it is one of a few

events of such kind in Russia so far, so it should be properly promoted and marketed, a target audience should be detected (which hasn't yet been done, although it's been two long years since Moscow Music Week was launched).

Due to the lack of information, nearly the absence of any marketing strategies, the number of attendees on the workshops and lectures went all the way down to zero, and it was no-fun situation, when there were more international delegates and speakers into the room than the audience they were supposed to perform at. Some of Russian speakers just didn't show up at their own lectures, even without last minute notice, which caused the cancellation of some of the conferences out of listed above.

Moreover (as discussed previously in Chapter 2, see 3.3.3. Booking Agencies and Music management paragraph), despite Russian speakers, and there was a vast majority of them, had really well-designed badges with their names and positions on those, the information they carried out was so non-exclusive and derived, that even those who somehow miraculously heard of Moscow Music Week happening and appeared to participate at the conferences or workshop were frankly bored, so there is a lot to take into account and think of before starting the development strategy of the event in the future.

The major changes should start from the team, which is a core of any business task, so it would be great to have a division of responsibilities instead of randomly taking on the tasks of your coworkers. It's also obvious that a team for a brand such big (or at least pretend to be such big) needs at least an office to regularly work at. During pre-production, we working at the various of venues (picture 9) which wasn't always convenient and definitely wasn't productive most of the times, because such places as bars or clubs are not really meant for the working process and brainstorming. Although it wasn't a bad thing, but I just feel it should be mentioned to underline the "DIY-ness" of this particular showcase festival.



PICTURE 9. Moscow Music Week team is brainstorming at Powerhouse, Moscow or just another Monday. (Photo: Makarova Irina)

Summing up our experience with the way Moscow Music Week 2017 went, we figured what needs to be drastically changed (the following, briefly), in order to improve the quality of the event next year:

- *The Delegates.*

To find a proper accommodation IN ADVANCE, accommodation should be located in walking distance to the majority of the venues engaged with Moscow Music Week 2018. The chosen hotel should be big enough to fit all the invited delegates in. The chosen hotel should be no less than four stars.



- *Information for the delegates.*

To develop a MMW application, that could be downloaded from App store and also compatible with Android platform. Navigation needs to be developed.

Recently updated information regarding force-majors. Online self-updated agenda.

- *Improving both the bracelet and ticket systems.*
- *Outsource:* in order to get qualified curators for showcases. Launching the offer for the technician director (application period is 01.08.2017-15.08.2017; tech rider attached is mandatory). Catering.
- *Volunteers.* Launching the series of training for volunteers. Improving the reward system for volunteers.
- *Marketing strategy improvements (my prayers were heard!):* Hiring a person in charge of promotion, marketing and SMM-marketing.
- *Conferences.* Looking for the moderators in advance. The LESS is the better. Venues for the conferences. A technician in charge of conferences.
- *Working with Artists.* Set the application period in advance. Supporting musicians after Moscow Music Week.
- *Division of responsibilities.* Working with delegates. Working with the artists. Working with volunteers. Conferences management. Showcase management. Logistics.

As you can see, there are many plans for improving the event and it would be extremely great if it least any of them are somewhat realized in the future. Why is this important? As repeatedly stated before in the thesis, showcase festivals are essential for the musicians who take their music career seriously and with all responsibility. The whole point of attending showcase-festivals for musicians is to be heard and spotted, to get well-connected, making acquaintances with international delegates who are often represent major labels, big festivals and showcase festivals, promoters etc., which may possibly lead to invitations to perform someplace bigger, significantly growing the audience or even getting signed for the major label.

Moscow Music Week is a relatively young event, most probably, due to its “uniqueness” in Russia. It’s kind of true, there are not so much showcase festivals

around. Unfortunately, since it's the only one showcase-festival in Russia of such kind, the creator of festival feels the monopoly in the field. Although it happens every now and then in any other field, this particular case is affecting the great idea of showcasing impartially with an open mind and perverting the system into another corrupted VIP place, where only bands, witty enough to befriend the creators of showcase-festival might be heard and spotted.

Local participants were mainly chosen from friends and the friends of friends. Sadly, there were no chances for ordinary musicians who were not somewhat related to Stefan Kazaryan (CEO of Moscow Music Week) to get into the showcase festival. We had plenty of applications from musicians all over Russia and nearly none of them were really checked out. Networking, you say? Not really. Networking usually happens during showcase-festivals, and what this case appears to be a closed community which seems to be impossible to join. International participants came along with the international delegates, who are also the friends of the head promoter.

The pattern of attending showcases by delegates was rather interesting. They were mostly hanging out with Kazaryan and following him from one venue of his choice to another. All of them. Bearing in mind, there were plenty of showcases, that started simultaneously, which dramatically lessened the chances for dozens of musicians to perform before at least a couple of delegates.

There were plenty of venues where nobody was present, but the showcases were still on schedule, so plenty of really good bands were basically playing in vain (keeping in mind, that it's a showcase festival, so every musician is playing without a concert fee). Bearing the above in mind, the idea of "showcasing your talents" turns into a chance to perform in the empty venue, for free.

What's for the Russian music industry, if there were more international events like Moscow Music Week, it could lead to the rise of competitiveness between showcase –festivals in Russia, which could bring Moscow Music Week and other hypothetical music international events entirely to the new level.

Currently, Moscow Music Week is a monopolist in the field, not because it's very well-produced, but mainly because no one else has claimed the place. Despite the development strategies mentioned earlier, nothing will drastically change until there is no real stimulation or fear to lose its place under the sun, which usually are the catalysts of progress.

The more of showcase festivals are out there on the market, the better the quality of each particular one. The more high-quality showcase-festivals in Russia, the bigger demand and interest in Russian music business: more international delegates from different countries will be annually coming to Russia in order to attend showcase festivals and to network, spreading the word of high-quality Russian events.

To summarize, I was trying to create a manual, useful for musicians and people who consider working in Russian music industry, which will be informative and interesting to read. Hopefully, one day there will be a flagman, that will lead Russian musicians abroad alongside with Moscow Music Week case becoming the greatest high-quality showcase-festivals of all time. And I believe over time it will happen eventually, since the music industry is like any other live and breathing creature can see and chose the right from wrong and will eventually chose what's better for its development and well-being.



PICTURE 10. The Lazies @ Kings of Kitay-Gorod Showcase, Moscow Music Week 2017. (Photo: Svetlana Seleznyova)

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Interview Andraž Kajzer (MENT Ljubljana festival)

**A: Bearing in mind you're rather familiar with Russian culture, especially music-wise, do you think if there're any striking differences between Russian and European artists? If so, do you think that mentality is the case?**

A: There are of course a lot of artists that somehow include the Russian culture into their music. And there are of course artists that sound as they could be from anywhere... In my experience, Russian artists are really eager to go on the road, to go out of Russia, to experience new things. I'm not saying artists from other countries are not eager but new Russian bands are really willing to do something and I think this is very positive.

**A: Do you know of any Russian bands nowadays that one day might be possibly become well-known in Europe or even world-wide famous? If so, why? If T.A.T.U case comes to mind, why do you think they could make abroad? Were they successful in your opinion?**

A: Sure, I do. One thing is to be famous, the other to be able to present your art around the world and be able to make a living out of it. I think the artists we present at MENT definitely have a potential for sustainable careers in the future. I also see other Russian artists making a good name for themselves out there.

As for T.A.T.U. I can't say for sure but definitely a combination of catchiness of the songs, "the provocative factor", speaking to young audience and of course the combination of the right music industry outfit that new how to deal with such an act. And how to promote it.

If being successful means being recognized then for sure, they were, as we all at least heard of them. But we'd have to ask them...

**A: Is language barrier a real case? Should a non-English speaking musician switch his lyrics into English language in order to gain more fans and to be**

**better understood or is it, a foreign language, a peculiar zest that is inseparable from an artist's image and should be left as it is?**

A: It is and it's not. I think the world is becoming more and more open to different languages... they can sound exotic, special and give the music a certain vibe. Of course, a lot of radios and the UK/US markets will be much harder to break. But music good enough can have any possible lyrics and it will get through to the audience. Just take Sigur Ros, for example...

The choice of the language is in the artists domain and if he/she doesn't feel right/at home with other languages it's better to stick with yours. Of course, there's always space for experiments, one single try outs etc.

**A: If, in the opposite, a non-native English singer-songwriter, who's genuinely good at songwriting in the language of Shakespeare, performs his or her material in English, is it, from your perspective, good or not? Is it a promising project to begin with? Is it generally interesting? Do you think if it's competitive enough on a larger scale? Why?**

A: We can't judge music by its origin... If the music is good, the lyrics can be in any language possible... if it transcends... It again depends on the type of music you're making and what you're going for artistically. If you want to make an indie rock band with English lyrics in 2017, you can but I guess trying English markets doesn't make sense as there are already tons of acts doing similar things. But who knows, perhaps you still stand out. I'd definitely say it's a hard one to crack.

**A: Do showcase-festivals and music conferences, that at first were, supposedly, meant to gather together the professionals from the industry, really give an opportunity to new comers to be heard nowadays?**

A: Showcase festivals go hand in hand with the music conferences and in my opinion this is definitely an opportunity for the new coming bands to be heard

and also to hear... The only 2 things that differ from the “normal” festivals at showcases are the amount of new coming bands and the number of professionals in one place. These 2 factors make “being heard” much easier. But I wouldn’t consider a showcase festival an event like Pop Idol TV show. You won’t perform at a showcase festival and be famous the next day. It doesn’t work this way. It works in different ways of expanding your network, the number of professionals being aware of you. You can build a tour or get some festival dates, you can find a record label, a publisher, get proper feedback, be noticed by some media, maybe you find a new fan who’ll tell about you to some other professionals who’ll book you for their venue 2 years later... The European music industry is pretty small and trying out these circles can be very beneficial to young acts.

What I mean by “they can also hear” is that the acts performing at showcase festivals should also open their ears at the conference, try to meet new people and of course hear other bands... See what they’re up to, meet new artists from other countries that are dealing with the same challenges as you are. And these contacts can be not only helpful but also new friendships.

**A: We all know for a fact, that networking is the essential part of another DIY musician’s life whilst building up their career. In your opinion, is there a chance connections one makes move him or her forward in his career path, in case their music is, plainly put, rather ordinary?**

A: This is a tough one. It really depends on what the musician wants... what’s his focus, market. If you’re interested in the Russian market come to the Moscow Music Week, if you want to have most of the European industry in one place, go to Eurosonic... but it also depends on which step of your career are you building and if you will be heard. Festivals like Eurosonic host around 300+ bands and it’s much harder to be heard over there than at smaller events. So, you need to know you’re prepared and that the time is right.

If you’re a DIY musician I’d first recommend getting yourself educated a bit about the way things work and what’s what. Maybe visiting a few events without playing there... and then try out smaller events.

Of course, connections can move you forward, even if your music is rather ordinary... Why? Because one - what's ordinary is subjective and in my subjective opinion there's a lot of audience for "ordinary music" and two - because that's how it is pretty much everywhere in life. BUT and that's BUT with CAPS LOCK - only the great will stay.

**A: Is social media really that important when it comes to boost a popularity of an artist? Is it even more important than live performances and touring? What do you pay attention to at first when you click to a band's page on Facebook?**

A: You have to talk to the people. Or inform an audience about your music. And in 2017 social media is one of the ways... It's also the easiest and cheapest one. Even if you're not into it, it's still a place where people will look for info regarding your music and concerts if they f.e. heard your song on the radio or elsewhere. Social media goes hand in hand with touring but I'd say nowadays too many bands go on tour too soon. There are so many acts on the road nowadays and the audience is overwhelmed with everything on their plate.

It depends on what am I looking for on the band's Facebook page but I'll definitely see the profile & cover picture - are there live dates, where are they playing... of course I'll see how many followers do they have as this can give you a certain feel for what's happening... This doesn't mean numbers necessarily correspond to anything but in most cases, it gives you certain info. I also check the about and sometimes the events page... And of course, I check the latest posts to see what the band is up to. The main thing most of the bands forget is that a music Facebook page should have some music up there. One of the best solutions is to have your last single pinned on your wall and please don't forget to put some useful links in the about section.

**A: Does, in your opinion, number of followers in social networks really equal to the number of solvent customers? If so, please, explain why.**

A: No... It really depends on the scenes, territory... Bands have more info as they know where the followers are from and this can be a good signal for touring.

Otherwise this numbers for newcomers mostly show how strong are they in their own country. And having 50 followers means you're just not interested... or you might have a VK page and that's definitely a difference between Russian and European acts.

**A: When it comes to followers in social media, we can see a huge divide between top “underground” artist (by underground I mean artists regularly performing at showcase festivals) and major artists whose audience is enough to fill in the stadium (by major I mean artists like, for instance, Sia or Rihanna). Do you think it's possible to jump from one state to another? If so, how would you recommend to do this?**

A: Sure, it's possible. Even Sia or Rihanna had to... To reach this kind of numbers you need hits, amazing content the audience will be able to relate to, a strong story, really strong promotion, something extraordinary happening around you... I think there's a lot of strong musicians around but it's hard to make big investments in your final outcome this is why a lot of projects seem a bit unfinished and end up being this unused great potential.

**A: What, in your opinion, is the key to success?**

A: Depends on how you perceive success. But staying true to your goals, to what you want and like, to stay opened minded and learn in the meanwhile seems like success to me. Otherwise work hard, do everything 110% and don't give up too soon.

Appendix 2. Interview Sandor Kozlov (The press executive and program organizer at A38 in Budapest, Hungary/ Sziget festival, Hungary/ Cultural attaché at Hungarian embassy in Moscow, Russia)

**A: Bearing in mind you're rather familiar with Russian culture, especially music-wise, do you think if there're any striking differences between Russian and European artists? If so, do you think that mentality is the case?**

**S:** In one case – yes, first of all, Russian pop singers compose their songs in a completely different way compared to western Europeans. For example, any kind of European music is created based on the rhythm or hooks, so the composition is starting to build up this way. They have a good tune, start to improvise in order to create a good song and only then they create lyrics. In Eastern Europe and especially in Russia the biggest difference is that the lyrics come first. Nowadays many Russian musicians are currently writing songs in English in a way British musicians do. But the most successful ones, writing songs in Russian language, write their lyrics first, it's about 90% of musicians, and it's one of the main differences in the creative process.

When it comes to the mentality of management, of course, there is a big difference because we have different traditions. For example, Russia or Hungary have club culture since 90s which means that this culture is only about 27 years old now. The countries in Western Europe have this culture from the 50s or even earlier. It was based on the club scene and the rock scene was also emerging on these subcultures, so that's a very big difference. The parents of generation that plays music right now – they never went clubbing, they only watched performances in so-called cultural houses or open air festivals which had nothing to do with the club venues and the high-quality festivals we have now.

Approach to music is also different. In Western Europe, there's a very well established a system for authorization of rights, which is completely different here, in Russia. For instance, in Hungary you can register your songs in order for them to be played on the radio or TV, with the local copyright company, meaning, Hungarian musicians can get a cashback from a radio or TV broadcast even being a member of a very underground band. If you're playing in a venue with up to

200 people and, say, once or twice a year you're playing on the festival, 80 percent of the venues and every festival are paying the money to the organization and the organization gives it back to you.

Of course, there are other difficulties. If you're a Russian musician, you have to get a visa to cross the border, you have to have much more money, compared to European musicians, to conquer Europe because you can't just go and make a tour by bus. European bands nearly never use airplanes whilst touring and for Russian bands sometimes is the only way to travel. Even if they make it to Europe eventually, a lot of venues here don't have backlines, drum sets or amplifiers, which need to be ordered and cost quite a lot. If it's a small Russian artist, venue won't take responsibility to pay for his needs, so the Russian band has to rent out the gear themselves. If the band, for instance, comes to five-stop tour they have to fly in every European country, they have to rent a bus, they have to rent the equipment and then when they're finished they have to return the stuff and to fly back home to Moscow or Saint-Petersburg.

**A: So, technically, touring in Europe kind of not really worth it moneywise (fees are not that big and you have to spend a lot, right?)**

S: That's true! Well, of course you can aim for a success. There are some examples of Russian bands becoming famous in Europe, but those are either living in Europe or touring more in Europe compared to Russia or they are quite huge in Russia and that's why they can afford aiming for a success.

For example, Russian band Leningrad is successful in Europe not only because they have a big Russian community but also because lot of Germans go to Leningrad concerts, a lot of Hungarians go to Leningrad concerts. Their songs are being played on the radio even though they are not singing in English. There are a lot of places that might be a good choice for a Russian band in order to become popular, for instance, the United States or Mexico but I'm not sure if it's money worth success. They can earn up to 5 thousand euros for a gig (in case of Leningrad it's much different, since they already are big and have accordingly high fees); in case of other bands, smaller bands, it's up to 5 thousand euros and it still may be not enough to cover a technician and a backline or other gear for

each club in Europe. Most of such musicians are forced to have a day-time job in order to earn their living. Which reminds me – selling your music for advertisement in Europe is a good thing that might become an additional way to earn money and not to give up your dream job. Commercials are being paid for quite well and gives you more opportunities to make new connections and then being invited to play to some bigger venues, festivals, etc.

**A: You mentioned the copyright organization in Hungary and artists are kind of forced to register their music there. Me, as a singer-songwriter, been working with a Swedish producer so I registered with Stim, and I thought it didn't really matter which country you're from in order to get a copyright for your music.**

S: That's true, but I learnt that the system within Europe doesn't generally work well. For instance, you're playing in Germany, after you played the gig, money goes to Gema (copyright organization in Germany) and then they have to distribute the money to a Hungarian, for instance, copyright company but it usually doesn't happen.

**A: How's that?**

S: Like that, you have no clue where the money ends up. I know it, because I used to manage a lot of Hungarian musicians abroad, wherever we played abroad, we filled in the papers according to the international register rules and then 3 or 4 times a year musician supposed to get the money from the copyright organization for playing live – by post or by online transaction, it doesn't really matter. Hungarian company always attaches a list where you can see the detailed payment, so you can always check what are these for exactly – radio broadcast, TV broadcast, etc. Usually if the band plays about 20 gigs a year abroad they tend to get about, well, one copyright payment back.

**A: So even within Europe the system isn't as flawless as it looks like?**

S: It has to be changed in some way because the communication between copyright companies is not so perfect. On the level of recording TV or radio



broadcast, for example, it works much better, but on the level of the live gigs it usually doesn't work so well. But the money is quite big! I mean, if you go to the German club with the capacity of 50 people of audience, according to the copyright law, you're supposed to get paid at around 1000 euros for playing at 5 places in a row, so it's weird that the money gets lost somewhere else. And there's absolutely no copyright laws working as they should in the United States when it comes to European acts performing there. It doesn't matter how big you are when it comes to the live shows.

It matters because you are the copyright holder. The label has the right over your records – they can control the record sales, but they can't control the live performances, the song broadcast on the radio, TV commercials or music videos. About 10 years ago you could sometime earn more money on selling your records on the concerts than on the concerts themselves. But now the average you can sell on your gig is 10-20 records and now getting paid for your live shows is a big deal! Of course, it depends on a band, on a venue, it depends on a lot things but still the record sales of the concerts are incredibly low and that's another reason the record companies are not knowing what to do in the future. They can go online but online sales are very-very poor.

**A: Now it all goes down to the streaming services and the artist doesn't really earn a lot from it.**

S: The small artist. Majors always earn a lot. Beyoncé, Rihanna earn a lot of these streaming companies but the smaller ones earn really a little.

**A: Isn't it a chance for small artists to become heard via streaming services?**

S: On one hand, but on the other hand there're more and more musicians like them that want to be heard so you can't choose from this huge number of bands that you have. Before you had a control over the scene. There were a lot of communities, there was an exchange between musicians, musicians were talking to each other. Even in Eastern Europe. Now there's less and less communication between Czech and Polish bands. Because everybody can find the opportunities to play via internet so they approach venues right ahead. But before there was an

internet or it wasn't spread so widely, the musicians asked each other for a help, they literally communicate, had a lot of friends. Today one of the biggest problems of the market not in the world-wide sense but in the regional sense that there is no communication between artists anymore.

**A: I thought that networking was the essential part of another DIY musician's life whilst building up their career. And now you're telling me they don't even talk to each other anymore! How's that possible?**

Nowadays musicians want very fast success. If they release a record, or if there's a musician that doesn't even have a record yet but he or she already wants to have a manager, to have a label, an agent in Europe, a promoter, a press guy to handle their Facebook page -- they want everything in a proper way. But sometimes – it's a good way for an English band – because Brits are aware: if they don't sign with a proper label they are nothing. They can tour all their lives in the small venues and play for 50 people in the hall and nothing big will ever happen to them. Of course, it's their point to get a manager, to get a label to take care of them. But I see that bands from our region, those more successful on the European level, who do it DIY, meaning, they take care of their own tours and their own stuff. Being a Russian artist, you can sign with a Dutch label, for instance, and you'll be 56<sup>th</sup> band in the list of that Dutch label. They say: "Ok that's a good band but I still have other 55 bands to handle." And maybe the label make your touring happen once and you'll be happy that it was such a successful tour, but then again, there are 55 bands more to take care of and you'll become lost and forgotten.

**A: Basically, you're saying that you have to try DIY without looking for any label to get signed with, because there are better chances to become big on your own?**

S: In the beginning, of course. It always depends. In Russia, the mechanisms are quite different than if you go international. Are you an international band or are you well known in your country? This is one big question. For example, you're not so well known in your country and you have only 870 views on the YouTube and you want to go international. Imagine: a club in Europe that checks your

profile out and sees there are only 870 views. “Ok”- they say, “These guys are from Moscow, they have 15 million people living in the city and they have such little views! How come?”

**A: Yeah, but in the very same time there are bands who are more popular abroad compare to here, for instance those who speak English get relatively more attention in Europe compared to their home country.**

S: It simply happens due to the lack of infrastructure. Many bands, smaller bands, only can tour between Moscow and Saint Petersburg, and the latter gets worse over time moneywise. In Europe, you can still find a lot of cities to perform at and Europe is very compact: you’re driving two hours a day and you’re in another big city

**A: Or even in another country.**

S: Yeah! So, you can tour Europe much easier than Russia and it’s your right in this case but that’s a strange thing – a lot of promoters in Europe think in terms of numbers. For them the number of followers you have on Facebook, and the number of viewers you have on YouTube is rather important when it comes to booking you and your band.

**A: Is social media really that important when it comes to boost a popularity of an artist? Is it even more important than live performances and touring? What do you pay attention to at first when you click to a band’s page on Facebook?**

S: When I was booking bands, I was interested in recorded live performances. You can listen to the songs on Soundcloud but this is not enough. The master track might be cleared out of the mistakes, recorded by session musicians. Studio recording isn’t the same as live performances. Sometimes you can have a really-really bad recording and a fabulous performance and vice versa (beautiful recording and a shitty performance).

YouTube is the most important channel, Facebook is only important in the follow-up, if you play for the first time

**A: YouTube it is then! When it comes to followers in social media, we can see a huge divide between top “underground” artist (by underground I mean artists regularly performing at showcase festivals) and major artists whose audience is enough to fill in the stadium (by major I mean artists like, for instance, Sia or Rihanna). Do you think it’s possible to jump from one state to another? If so, how would you recommend to do this?**

S: It’s possible, of course! Lady Gaga is a good example for that. She’s been playing in the venues for 400-500 people and suddenly she became one of the biggest icons in today’s music. To get on this level you need other mechanism to work.

**A: What kind of?**

S: Capitalism ha-ha. Really, because you’re becoming a product, it’s not so much about music anymore it’s in the direct way becomes a product of mass consumption and to make it product of mass consumption you’ll have to go on a bigger level. It’s true for all sectors of economy. If you want to sell toothpaste and you want to become bigger, you have to produce more toothpaste and make better advertisements. You have to fill up all the stores with your toothpaste, so the people will remember your brand. That’s what all the major labels do.

**A: So technically it’s not about music anymore but about marketing.**

S: For sure, you sell a product right now, so after that it’s not about selling your music, it’s about your brand on the completely different level. I think that Russian musicians don’t have to think about this level from the start because the chances they become so big are very low. I mean, if you think of T.a.T.u and, you know, Pussy Riot also had a management backing them so it was not an independent artistic movement, it was a well-planned, well-managed thing.

**A: So, you’re saying they only made it because they were commercial?**

S: Well yeah, there're two ways to obtain that – a slow way and a fast way of building your brand up. The very good example of a slower way is Leningrad, which was a really underground band back in a day.

**A: But it's been 20 years since they're on stage!**

S: They were building their audience really slow. They are not copying anyone. And in my opinion, if you're quite an original you can be big. In terms that you don't become the brand we discussed earlier.

**A: Getting back to T.a.T.u. case. If they were really successful., how come they couldn't stay on top?**

S: There are a lot of reasons for that! For example, they were teenage stuff, so they grew up and their audience, accordingly, grew up... Plainly put, they were a well-managed brand, nothing special. But if you have an original sound you can last for long. That's where the stereotypes kick in. Why Leningrad is so famous among foreigners? Because they are...

**A: So, Russian?**

S: You understand. Why Rammstein is so popular? Cause they are so German! There are stereotypes. People don't expect from Russia to give the world a new Radiohead. It's not that it's not possible, it's just you have to get a flagman. Nobody knew about Swedish bands before Abba. They were the trigger and they put Sweden on top. But before Abba nobody has dealt with Swedish music whatsoever.

**A: Yeah, but then again Abba came in through Eurovision and I can't think of any other band who would be so famous and kept on being popular after Eurovision for so long period of time! For years!**

S: There were some other artists, three or four, I guess.

**A: Not even close to Abba!**

S: True. Julio Iglesias? Anyway, another example is Bjork who started really underground. She made her own career bigger and at the same time she made an Icelandic scene big: then Sigur Ros came, then one after another and a lot of Icelandic bands became to be huge. And even now if you see “Icelandic” you might want to go there only just because you hear the brand, because now you think it’s a really interesting and strange place with a really weird music

**A: Marvel and Thor also come to mind...**

S: Yeah. But now you have a stereotype about the country. But if I were to create a band and call it (pointing at the box with nuts) hazel something, and I were to go on tour and to tell people I’m from Slovakia, I think 10 times less people will show up compared to the imaginable Icelandic band just because of where they came from. There’s currently a huge interest in in Japanese music, literature and culture overall. The chances that people will go to see a band from Japan than to see another East-European musician are also far higher. Every country has or doesn’t have a brand, true story.

**A: If you are a beginner musician, you’ll have to come up with a made-up story and tell people you; re from Iceland although you’re an original Slavic, for instance, is that correct?**

S: Yeah, I am sure about this. Can you imagine how many offers people from different countries get? When I was working in the club, I got an average of 20 bands a day asking me to check out their music. Of course, I didn’t listen to all the music I received. For example (and it’s a good example!) the band sends me PDF file with their bio, video links and promo pictures. If I see the photo of the band I almost already know what they play. And if it’s a bad photo I can always tell for sure that this particular band isn’t a professional one, and maybe I even skip listening to their music since I have a lot of other musicians to listen to. If I see that the band is from Iceland, I imagine putting them in the roster of my bar: knowing that there’s an Icelandic band playing, more people will show up. You have a different kind of mechanism that drives you forward. If Russia had a public

person or a musician, or a band that could trigger the Russian scene it could lead to increased interest in Russian culture, and it could also give a chance for smaller Russian bands to become more and more international.

**A: So, do you know of any current Russian bands who could become popular in Europe or States even worldwide famous any time soon?**

S: There's a band, but I can't quite remember a name...

**A: Haha so, obviously, it's not THAT big!**

S: They are called the Little Big, do you know this band?

**A: Oh yeah, they act like Russian Die Antwoord.**

S: That's what I say! So they use a complete stereotype. They can say: "I am crazy like Russian", -- they say...

**A: "Every day I am drinking, I am drinking every day?"**

S: Yeah. And they use a very-well working stereotype of Die Antwoord. So, they actually copy the copy of the copy. I had a talk with their European manager and I said I would never book this band because I hate this kind of artistic approach but anybody else can do it, so let them do it. And they are quite big in Europe, in an underground way they are even huge! I mean, they play in front of thousands of people so I think it's big for an artist who's not even so well-known in Russia. But you see they work with the stereotypes.

I heard about the success of the band called Pompeya, although their success to me seems to be a little bit fabricated. I've been to the festivals they played at. They played on the bad stages, at bad timing, just to say "we were there", so it's more about doubtful self-promotion rather than an international success. There are still some scenes, the world-wide scenes, where Russians could be bigger but there is no Russian export to the world music, although Russians could be very interesting for the world. The world is filled with African musicians, Moroccan

musicians, Latin American musicians, even Eastern-European musicians and it's a miracle, it's a very strange thing there is no Russian folk act on the world scene.

**A: So far.**

S: So far, which is strange for me.

**A: But should it be a stereotypical Russian act, like Leningrad or could it be a singer songwriter with English lyrics? Is language barrier a real case? Should a non-English speaking musician switch his lyrics into English language in order to gain more fans and to be better understood or is it, a foreign language, a peculiar zest that is inseparable from an artist's image and should be left as it is?**

S: I think, you can make smaller successful tours by touring and singing in English, but unless you play something genius and different it won't work out the way you want it. You, obviously, can sing in English but in this case, do something different music wise. If Russian musicians sing in English and do the same thing their Swedish, British or American colleagues do, I can't see why they should be more famous if there are hundreds of bands of the same quality on the same level, doing the same.

**A: But could they be at least competitive?**

S: They can't be competitive with Swedish or British bands.

**A: Why is that?**

S: Because these bands have a huge promotional background. Do you know how big music festivals work nowadays?

If you are a big label or a big agency, for instance, you have Sia. There's a festival that says could I book Sia from your roster? And you say: "Ok, yes, of course, it costs 300000 euros (although I think she's worth half a million actually), deal, but could you also book three of my artists alongside with her?" And the festival



will have to book three other artists from this agency and suddenly the festival sees its own roster being filled up with the additional acts. And if you're not anyhow related to the agency, you just have no chance.

**A: Are there any bands you noticed playing and liked at MMW?**

S: I guess, Glintshake. They were invited to play at the Icelandic Airwaves festival after that, and it's a step forward. It's good for your CV and recorded live video from such a festival will look good on your YouTube page, but it's also really important what you're going to do next.

There was a band from Yemen. The band was called A-WA. There were 3 girls singing on top of the electronic bit, they had a really good video shoot and they made a really good promotion for their songs and for their shows – they had the best showcases at Eurosonic and VOMEX and so on. Everybody were crazy about them and a lot of big festivals booked them but ever since – nothing has happened to this band. I think it's a big mistake because if they would have released a record after the showcase festival, they could have strengthened what they had back then and still be on top. Now one could hardly remember their name. They were quite interesting but 4 years has passed – they became older, maybe it's not safe to book them because they could cancel the show. It works on conscious levels.

You go to the supermarket you always see the same products and after some time you buy them. People usually tend to choose the same brands over and over again even unconsciously. It works the same way with the music – if you don't constantly remind about yourself, you'll end up forgotten. You can make a great tour in Europe...

**A: But it's not enough unless you're already on top.**

**Do showcase-festivals and music conferences, that at first were, supposedly, meant to gather together the professionals from the industry, really give an opportunity to new comers to be heard nowadays?**

S: I think showcase festivals are quite useful. You could hear and see a band you would never discover yourself. I personally booked some of the bands I have seen live at showcase festivals. But it also might play a bad trick with you: I heard of some bands that played their show poorly and got labeled as “the band that played that bad show”.

**A: Please, list 3 best show-case festivals you would recommend for a DIY musician to attend, in order to pursue their dream to get heard and well-connected.**

S: It depends on the genre. If you’re an indie band you could go to Eurosonic in Groningen, Netherlands or Tallinn Music Week in Estonia.

**A: As far as I know, Russians can’t really attend Eurosonic due to politic reasons.**

S: I think I saw some Armenian or Georgian bands playing there...

**A: It’s not Russia.**

S: Oh, I couldn’t remember this fact but sounds like it can be so.

In this case, you should go to Tallinn Music Week, MENT festival in Ljubljana, which are more regional, Reeperbahn festival in Hamburg also is a good one. If you’re a world music musician you could go to WOMEX (the World Music Expo) or MENT or any other festival. If you’re a Jazz band you should go to Jazz Ahead. So, it’s all depends on the genre.

People tend to forget one important thing. Many musicians want to sound like their favorite artist and they are not looking for their own sound or for their own words, their own personality. The biggest problem with many Russian bands, in my opinion, is that they forget about their roots. And they try to be like the favorite bands from the UK or from Sweden.

**A: And by “roots” you mean vodka, brown bears and more of authentic attributes of a Russians’ daily life?**

S: I mean the spirituals, not only the folk songs. For example, Russians have a very strong theatrical influence, so maybe a Russian band could think about the visuals. The Russian band could be a mixture of the theater and music which is quite an interesting thing. For example, Aukcion (rus. - Аукцион) is a very great band with a lot of psycho and theatrical performances! Reminds me of the Talking Heads. I think this is one of the strong benefits of Russian popular music – going theatrical.

Russian electronic music is quite interesting, it's different from German or American scene, one big artist might easily come up from there.

A mixture of Russian classical music traditions -- why didn't you implement some classics? -- for example, Russian romance has really interesting background and if you put it into a pop music or modern musical level it brings a lot of lines melodically-wise that could blow your mind off! Why does a lot of American musicians use Russian tunes in their music? For example, Robby Williams, of course for a fake song about Russia – it doesn't matter, Sting used Prokofiev's tunes to compose his music. So there's plenty of options to experiment with, not only folk music!

Of course, many of you think it's old-fashioned, but why don't Americans think that their blues music is old and useful? White Stripes is a blues band, although they put it in a modern way. Russians have to think about putting their traditions on a modern level. You don't have to copy western examples, make your own music and you have a lot of background for that! Make your band look unique. If I had to launch a band – instead of becoming Russian Lady Gaga or Russian Die Antwoord or whatever, because it's not interesting unless you're doing it like the Little Big.

**A: But their live performances, at least those I've seen, are pretty much theatrical, aren't they?**

S: Yes, but they do it in another way. You could do it less freaky way. But it's only my opinion.

**A: The next question was supposed to sound like “What, in your opinion, is the key to success?” but you’ve already kind of summed it up!**

S: Kind of, yeah! I’d love to add though, that musicians have to listen to other genres as well. A lot of people start to play music because they want to be successful and it’s not a good thing.

If you see the most successful bands from Poland – those are the jazz bands. Why? Poland had a big traditional jazz scene and they had a lot of festivals even during the socialist era and they have some really strong musicians and they tour a lot – I mean – Polish jazz bands. Russians also have to think about that, you shouldn’t play a music you don’t like – people have to play the music that they like, but they have to listen to other genres in order to learn one from another. People will be surprised they could find their favorites in classical music, in electronic music, in rap music etc. Then they can decide what to start with. But if they want to be the next Sia and they only listen to Sia, or only music of that kind, it’s not going to work. Look at Bjork again, she combines classical music with the experimental music scene, she’s a professional but she also has some interest in underground

**A: So technically you have to be a professional in order to go big.**

S: Yeah. And also, you have to know the scene quite well.

Appendix 3. Interview Christoffer Gunnarsson (Klubb Kalabalik, Festival in Blädinge, Kronobergs Län, Sweden)

**A: Bearing in mind you're rather familiar with Russian culture, especially music-wise, do you think if there're any striking differences between Russian and European artists? If so, do you think that mentality is the case?**

C: While I feel, there are many differences between Russian and European artists I wouldn't say they are striking. In general I wouldn't differentiate Europe and Russia in such a sense but from my perspective East-European artists tend to sound less derivative and there seems to be a genuine sense of excitement for new ideas and movements. Among artists and audience alike. I feel, in general the European music scene comes off as a bit more grounded, rational, cynical. I feel that European artists in many cases create music for a target audience while I feel Russian artist tend to act more "out of the box". I might add that I feel Russian artists seem to look towards the future while nostalgia is ever so popular in Europe (or the West" in general).

**A: Do you know of any Russian bands nowadays that one day might be possibly become well-known in Europe or even world-wide famous? If so, why?**

C: I might be late to the party already but would suspect "Little Big" to tour worldwide very soon if they aren't already. They might also pave the way for other Russian bands. Their success I think comes a lot from them doing something zany and doing it really well. I think "IC3PEAK" might breakthrough internationally at least in underground circles. As with "Little Big" they do something that is very different and they execute on it with a stunning vision. Both of these bands has (as far as I know) built their success on their own with strong use on the internet, strong imagery and well produced music videos. T.A.T.u I would certainly consider successful. They were controversial with catchy songs. I think they had a very international sound.

**A: Is language barrier a real case? Should a non-English speaking musician switch his lyrics into English language in order to gain more fans and to be**

**better understood or is it, a foreign language, a peculiar zest that is inseparable from an artist's image and should be left as it is?**

C: As for employing your native language or not. For me I'd say either can have both positives and negatives. I would suspect singing in English is almost a must if world domination is the goal but I think healthy success is achievable with Russian lyrics. It's so dependent on style and genre that I find it hard to make any sweeping statements.

**A: Do showcase-festivals and music conferences, that at first were, supposedly, meant to gather together the professionals from the industry, really give an opportunity to new comers to be heard nowadays?**

C: To be honest I'm not too familiar with showcase festivals. I think it's a good concept and a perfect opportunity for promoters and industry people to network and get new ideas. It's important that proper audience shows interest as well though or these events might become too in-house with industry people entertaining themselves in a vacuum.

The only showcase festival I've been part of myself is Moscow Music Week and for me it's been a great experience. I think in general, in this age, there are lots of musical gatherings in all shapes and sizes. Definitely a good thing and it means even smaller bands in particular genres or styles can get attention outside of support slots at major events.

**A: We all know, that networking is the essential part of another DIY musician's life whilst building up their career. In your opinion, is there a chance connections one makes move him or her forward in his career path, in case their music is, plainly put, rather ordinary?**

C: I think no matter if the music is ordinary (or nothing special) or not, networking is important. The music itself doesn't have to be it all.

**A: Is social media really that important when it comes to boost a popularity of an artist? Is it even more important than live performances and touring?**

**What do you pay attention to at first when you click to a band's page on Facebook?**

C: I think social media is very important today, especially internationally. I think locally one can reach success by being a prominent live artist. Social media is a great tool either way. Good imagery and/or videos can help a lot with first impressions. It's what I look for.

**A: Does, in your opinion, number of followers in social networks really equal to the number of solvent customers? If so, please, explain why.**

C: I don't think so, no. Of course, there is some worth in having a high number of followers but it's rarely indicative of anything. It depends from case to case.

**A: When it comes to followers in social media, we can see a huge divide between top "underground" artist (by underground I mean artists regularly performing at showcase festivals) and major artists whose audience is enough to fill in the stadium (by major I mean artists like, for instance, Sia or Rihanna). Do you think it's possible to jump from one state to another? If so, how would you recommend to do this?**

C: I think this huge jump is easy to understand. As the higher number is likely to involve investors and paid personnel. It involves a completely different financial situation and exposure on another level. I don't think there is an easy way to make that jump. Sometimes things happen at the right place at the right moment but in general I think hard work and strong will is needed, at the very least.

**A: What, in your opinion, is the key to success?**

C: To be successful I think it's important to genuinely believe in what you do.

#### Appendix 4. Interview Martin Lippert (music journalist, Germany)

**A: Do you know of any Russian bands nowadays that one day might be possibly become well-known in Europe or even world-wide famous? If so, why?**

M: Frankly, no real current band comes to mind, especially if I look at our (Intro Mags) perspective. The only band we've covered a bit this year was Motorama, they are a name and a moderate success, but being active for more than ten years now I don't see them breaking more largely.

**A: If T.A.T.U case comes to mind, why do you think they could make abroad? Were they successful in your opinion?**

M: That's an easy one as they were produced by Trevor Horn (Buggles member, founder of ZTT, producer of Yes, Grace Jones, Frankie goes to Hollywood, Pet Shop Boys and loads more, basically „the guy who made the 80ies “) - so there was an external / foreign success factor in play, as much as T.A.T.U.'s calculated „scandal “... They of course had a massive hit with the Eurovision song and a couple of others, but looking back one tends to remember them as a one hit wonder. So, yes, initial big success, but not a longstanding career.

Pussy Riot would be a different example, over here, their reception was mostly based on their political stances and actions, not so much about their music.

**A: Is language barrier a real case? Should a non-English speaking musician switch his lyrics into English language in order to gain more fans and to be better understood or is it, a foreign language, a peculiar zest that is inseparable from an artist's image and should be left as it is?**

M: Quite torn on this question between my private and professional opinions. The private one would say: I listen to a lot of stuff in foreign languages I don't understand, and even though I'm quite fluent in French, I wouldn't say I understand the French songs I listen to as well as English or German ones. So even if you're quite „open“ (as I tend to think I am), the majority of artists I listen to compose in English or German. On the other hand, there's the professional opinion, where I think that the way people discover music and bands are promoted through media, it has a lot to do with „your personal cultural environment“- meaning all the stuff that surrounds you in terms of music discovery: media (print, web, radio, TV, ...), clubs/festivals, friends, etc.

We had this massive summer hit called „Despacito“ in Germany throughout the summer (worldwide, really) - that's unusual for Germany as it's probably the first Spanish-spoken big hit since „Macarena“. (The song is awful, the lyrics are utter sexist, for sure, but that's not the point here). So yes, it can happen even on a large scale, but it's more of an exception than the rule.

On the other hand, there are a lot of bands from e.g. Scandinavia, Iceland that have niche to moderate to big success, and sometimes even very continuously, in Germany, take Sigur Rós for example. But there also is a lot of money poured into marketing them from foreign export offices who really do a lot to break artists on our local market. And I understand there is no comparable institution in Russia for popular music. (Things might be different for classical music I guess, but I don't have any large insights into that genre). It will of course



also be different for instrumental artists (e.g. electronic music), DJs etc. - but here we're talking about „singing” artists.

In the end, I would say: breaking a (western) market with a non-local or widely spoken/understood language (English) will always be much harder. Which doesn't mean you shouldn't try. Personally, I think that, if an artist really has something to say, you will understand that no matter what language the lyrics are in - in the sense of: you may not understand what the song is about, but I think you're able to „feel” if somebody really has something to say.

**A: If, in the opposite, a non-native English singer-songwriter, who's genuinely good at songwriting in the language of Shakespeare, performs his or her material in English, is it, from your perspective, good or not?**

M: Following up to what I responded to the question before, I don't think it really makes much of a difference in the sense of „good” or „bad”. For the artists, it should be a question of whether they feel more comfortable expressing themselves in their native or in a foreign language.

**A: Is it a promising project to begin with? Is it generally interesting? Do you think if it's competitive enough on a larger scale? Why?**

M: From the business perspective, I would say (as stated above): it raises the chances of awareness for the reasons stated above.

**A: Do showcase-festivals and music conferences, that at first were, supposedly, meant to gather together the professionals from the industry, really give an opportunity to new comers to be heard nowadays?**

M: Really depends what showcase you're at. One interesting learning I found out at MMW was that a lot of the people I met stated they felt more comfortable at smaller showcases/conferences rather than the big ones such as Eurosonic, SXSW etc. The smaller ones bring the advantage of less programming, thus more chances of actually seeing a lot and maybe discovering something you weren't aware of before. At the „big ones”, people tend to flock to the already pre-hyped packed shows, giving smaller and less buzzed-about acts lower chances of getting discovered by the „important industry players”. But apart from that: yes, playing at these events is important.

**A: Please, list 3 best show-case festivals you would recommend for a DIY musician to attend, in order to pursue their dream to get heard and well-connected.**

M: Eurosonic / Groningen  
c/o Pop / Cologne  
Waves / Vienna

**A: We all know for a fact, that networking is the essential part of another DIY musician's life whilst building up their career. In your opinion, is there a chance connections one makes move him or her forward in his career path, in case their music is, plainly put, rather ordinary?**

M: Depends on how you define „ordinary”. If you mean mainstream, no prob. There’s always room for that. I would put it this way: if you’re original in some kind of way, good chances. If you happen to tend to a genre that’s very hyped in the very moment, you’ll have many-many competitors in the same „field”, thus less chances to get noticed if you’re, say, one of 10 bands trying to be a „me too” of a currently popular genre.

**A: Is social media really that important when it comes to boost a popularity of an artist? Is it even more important than live performances and touring? What do you pay attention to at first when you click to a band’s page on Facebook?**

M: Does anybody actually visit the actual band page on FB anymore? I personally tend to that only in a couple of very seldom cases: liking it for the first time, checking if they’ve currently been active if I liked them some time ago and feel I „haven’t heard from them (they may be super active, but the FB algorithm tends to hide that from you), or checking for tour dates. Most of the interaction I have with band / artist pages happens through my newsfeed, or other media reporting / posting on them.

But yes, social media is very important to gain attention - not just in the sense of „you don’t exist if you’re not on FB / Instagram/ Soundcloud / VK / etc., but also because you can have a direct relationship with fans, followers, media etc. It’s just quite hard to reach the point of followership from where a certain organic growth sets in.

Basically, I would say: both social media and live are equally important, in the end, both boil down to the same thing: be active, be „findable”, „be there”, make yourself heard.

**A: Does, in your opinion, number of followers in social networks really equal to the number of solvent customers? If so, please, explain why.**

M: No. The equation is already broken by streaming music. If there were a formula such as „1000 followers equal 10 albums sold or 20 gig tickets sold” - it simply doesn’t work anymore. Number of plays on Spotify are a much better data insight.

Also, the bigger the artists and the more major the industry backing, I wouldn’t trust FB follower numbers that much. A lot of German FB pages have impressive follower numbers - if you look behind them, some have vast followerships from countries that are unlikely to be real. This: <http://www.sterntv-experimamente.de/FacebookLikeCheck/> is a great tool to look at the international split of followers. A big international act will of course have an international followership, but, for example, a German-written blog on some niche topic with strong numbers in South America will quite likely just have purchased followerships. Same goes for Instagram where you can simply buy Followers for mille-cents. So, total numbers are not totally worthless, but not a 100% secure indicator. It makes much more sense to dig deeper and look at the interactions, such as the relation of post likes to shares, total numbers of likes and shares, etc.

**A: When it comes to followers in social media, we can see a huge divide between top “underground” artist (by underground I mean artists regularly**

**performing at showcase festivals) and major artists whose audience is enough to fill in the stadium (by major I mean artists like, for instance, Sia or Rihanna). Do you think it's possible to jump from one state to another? If so, how would you recommend to do this?**

M: Haha. If I knew how to do that, I'd probably have my own business and would write this email from my private island resort rather than my kitchen table. Just kidding. Yes, it's possible, but there is no certain way to do it, and I tend to think that in the long run, you just can't plan it. It helps to have an organization backing you with lots of marketing money (10 to 15 years ago, I would have written „label” instead of „organization “, but even that has changed. A synch deal (song in ads) with a big brand can help do that. A content based cooperation with a big brand (e.g. Red Bull Music Academy) can help do that. Support from a national export office can help do that. A „radio hit” will surely help. Getting attention on Soundcloud will help. Getting shitloads of plays on Spotify will definitely help, even more if an artist's song is plugged into a popular, big, public playlist - there is currently going a lot of money into playlist curation, placement in playlists and promotion of playlist. Of course, I do believe that we as a publisher and event company have our fair share in that as well - putting artists on stages and tours and writing about them. But in the end, there's no success formula - unless of course, you are The KLF ;)

Appendix 5. Interview Aron Lukasz (Bankito feztival in Budapest, Hungary)

**A: Bearing in mind you're rather familiar with Russian culture, especially music-wise, do you think if there're any striking differences between Russian and European artists? If so, do you think that mentality is the case?**

A: I've seen a lot crazier, extremely vibrant live presence of Russian artists than I've seen from European bands. I was never thinking about the core of it, but the short answer is yes, probably it's because of the mentality and cultural differences. Russians are always noted as straightforward, high-tempered nation.

**A: Do you know of any Russian bands nowadays that one day might be possibly become well-known in Europe or even world-wide famous? If so, why? If T.A.T.U case comes to mind, why do you think they could make abroad? Were they successful in your opinion?**

A: To be honest, I'm mainly following more underground / subcultural bands. My favorites are The Jack Wood and Wet Red. The T.A.T.U. case is totally different, they could easily make a profit from the marketing pros of the 90s sexual "revolution" and the era of accidentally gay/lesbian kisses on the MTV stages. Nowadays, being successful needs a totally different perspective or view. You can't be just simply weird, you'll have to make strategic plans and conquer markets, but yes, in my opinion, they were extremely successful.

**A: Is language barrier a real case? Should a non-English speaking musician switch his lyrics into English language in order to gain more fans and to be better understood or is it, a foreign language, a peculiar zest that is inseparable from an artist's image and should be left as it is?**

A: Yes. There's a very little chance to reach international popularity in the western markets without singing in English or either Spanish. Of course, language as an important medium and channel to the fans is a deep part of each artist, but I think most of the songwriters should reach a level of creativity and poetry in English if they want to be successful.

**A: If, in the opposite, a non-native English singer-songwriter, who's genuinely good at songwriting in the language of Shakespeare, performs his or her material in English, is it, from your perspective, good or not? Is it a promising project to begin with? Is it generally interesting? Do you think if it's competitive enough on a larger scale? Why?**

A: Of course, it's good. Me personally not a Russian speaker, which means I'd have to invest energy into "decoding" the meaning of a Russian artist. Simply as that, I prefer to consume arts understandable for me.

**A: Do showcase-festivals and music conferences, that at first were, supposedly, meant to gather together the professionals from the industry, really give an opportunity to new comers to be heard nowadays?**

A: Short answer, yes. This is the only way in my opinion. You'll have to get into the circulation. This is how you can organize tours, festival gigs etc. Personal relationships are much more important than people would think.

**A: Please, list 3 best show-case festivals you would recommend for a DIY musician to attend, in order to pursue their dream to get heard and well-connected.**

A: BUSH (Budapest Showcase Hub), MENT Festival, Nouvelle Prague

**A: We all know for a fact, that networking is the essential part of another DIY musician's life whilst building up their career. In your opinion, is there a chance connections one makes move him or her forward in his career path, in case their music is, plainly put, rather ordinary?**

A: It's an extremely difficult question. Let's say we start from the point that the musician creates something unique, interesting and valuable. This is basic stuff. Everything comes after this. If you're a good artist, then there is the basis to build on that. The next step is networking, getting to know professionals in the industry and getting known.

**A: Is social media really that important when it comes to boost a popularity of an artist? Is it even more important than live performances and touring? What do you pay attention to at first when you click to a band's page on Facebook?**

A: The first thing what I check is the visuals of the band – considering that I never heard them. If that's catchy, then I'll go for the music, then check their "personality" from their posts. I'd rather say social media is a booster which can be built on real people. You'll have to organize successful tours, place your music on playlists, maintain a good PR. That's how you can be recognized. Then you'll have the possibility to communicate with your EXISTING audience on social media.

**A: Does, in your opinion, number of followers in social networks really equal to the number of solvent customers? If so, please, explain why.**

A: Yes. But it depends on your marketing strategy. You can build a strategy which is based on developing and maintaining your existing fan base/customer pool on social media OR you can try to increase your recognition by online promotions and tabloid-like stories, viral contents and build a significantly larger online follower base than your "real" audience.

**A: When it comes to followers in social media, we can see a huge divide between top "underground" artist (by underground I mean artists regularly performing at showcase festivals) and major artists whose audience is enough to fill in the stadium (by major I mean artists like, for instance, Sia or Rihanna). Do you think it's possible to jump from one state to another? If so, how would you recommend to do this?**

A: This is something I honestly don't know – and I guess no one knows. Sorry.

**A: What, in your opinion, is the key to success?**

A: There are no keys for success. But you can do several things to increase your possibilities.

1. Strategic planning for 1-3-5-10 years - just like in any business
2. Public appearances and networking based on your plans
3. Don't waste time or energy on anything which is not connected to your plans
4. Work with only the best people you know
5. Always be kind to everyone around you
6. Never underestimate the importance of telling your OR your artist's story. Stories are the easiest ways to make people connected

Appendix 6. Interview Matjaž Manček (Kino Šiška centre for Urban Culture, MENT Festival in Ljubljana, Slovenia)

**A: Bearing in mind you're rather familiar with Russian culture, especially music-wise, do you think if there're any striking differences between Russian and European artists? If so, do you think that mentality is the case?**

M: Well, here we stumble upon the most critical question, which, sadly, too much politicized, instead of being subject to cultural and geographical criteria – what is considered to be Europe nowadays?

Almost 30 years have passed since the fall of the iron curtain, but – it's still very much present in the heads of people. On both sides. You see...I'm myself talking about sides... What is Europe and how should it look like is being decided in Berlin-Brussels-Paris axis, with UK acting still as a self-sufficient island of popular music empire... it seems that nothing happens if it does not happen there. But all this is less and less true. All the Eastern – majorly Slavic – Europe is building economic and cultural self-confidence, it will realize sooner or later, that there is not only West direction to look to, but that it is even more natural and necessary to connect eastwards. This is what we doing with our event MENT and collaborating with other fresh initiatives throughout the Eastern Europe – from Hungary, Serbia, Romania, Poland, Czech, Slovakia, Baltics, Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. We are all in pretty much in the same position and we all have a lot in common – we all have drawn influences from great established

artists from the West, but have processed the influences in our own ways and gave them particular flavors. The generation of internet is global and there cannot be any striking differences anymore. We all on the Eastern side of Europe are sharing the challenge to develop our music markets more professionally, but on the other side, there is more passion, more thrill and excitement in our side than in the saturated, they've-seen-it-all markets of Western Europe.

**A: Do you know of any Russian bands nowadays that one day might be possibly become well-known in Europe or even world-wide famous? If so, why? If T.A.T.U case comes to mind, why do you think they could make abroad? Were they successful in your opinion?**

M: I don't know much about T.A.T.U. which to my knowledge was very carefully fabricated commercial product. And successful in that field. All good, but this is a field I'm not interested about. I'm interested in real bands and artists with innovative content, strong stage presence and fresh energy. I've seen them many in the past 2 years, some of them we have or we will host like: Spasibo, Glintshake, Lucidvox, Oligarkh, Shortparis, Kate NV, Anton Maskeliade. All of these artists have an international potential, crowd at our festival went wild for those of them who have already performed, and I know that will go wild also for those who will perform at the upcoming festival. And if people at our festival can get excited to their performance, the same can be in festivals in Hungary, Slovakia, Poland... More challenging is to break through to the traditionally strong and saturated markets like German, UK, US, which will lead the way for a while still. But not forever.... The Eastern European region has to empower itself to be able to produce bigger stars who can tour the region and fill up the venues here. Then these artists will become interesting for other markets as well.

**A: Is language barrier a real case? Should a non-English speaking musician switch his lyrics into English language in order to gain more fans and to be better understood or is it, a foreign language, a peculiar zest that is inseparable from an artist's image and should be left as it is?**

M: The worst thing is hearing a bad English. There is no general rule. For some it works to write and perform in English and sounds proper, for some it is much



better to preserve the language specialty in which they can normally also express more convincingly. Think of Sigur Ros – nobody understands their lyrics, but this is what makes them special additionally to the great compositions. And also, again, we must get rid of this idea that in order to make it, you have to be big in London and New York. Russian language is covering pretty vast areas and potential markets, not to mention that all the Slavic languages are pretty similar and one Serbian or Slovenian can get pretty good idea of what the Russian lyrics are about with a bit of an effort.

**A: If, in the opposite, a non-native English singer-songwriter, who's genuinely good at songwriting in the language of Shakespeare, performs his or her material in English, is it, from your perspective, good or not? Is it a promising project to begin with? Is it generally interesting? Do you think if it's competitive enough on a larger scale? Why?**

M: As I said above...there is no general rule. We are hosting at following MENT an Icelandic hip-hop/trap/rap group, rapping in their language. Not a word to understand, but the sound of their rapping is so intense that it pulls you in and you are scrambling the choruses in Icelandic before you know it... And all the mentioned bands above – for my opinion, they would lose the specialty if they would switch to English. Never will a Russian or Polish or Slovenian band sound as English and Brit-rock as the English bands are... and never will sound as Californian punk as the Californian band's sound. So, we must go on shaping and pushing our own specialties.

**A: Do showcase-festivals and music conferences, that at first were, supposedly, meant to gather together the professionals from the industry, really give an opportunity to new comers to be heard nowadays?**

M: Sure, they do. Me and my colleague have been to Moscow Music Week and now 5 Russian acts will play in Slovenia. And MMW booker was at our festival and 2 Slovenian acts have performed in Moscow as a result. And these are just two direct examples

**A: Please, list 3 best show-case festivals you would recommend for a DIY musician to attend, in order to pursue their dream to get heard and well-connected.**

M: Tallinn Music Week, Spring Break Poznan, MENT Ljubljana. I would also highly recommend a bigger summer festival Pohoda in Slovakia

**A: We all know for a fact, that networking is the essential part of another DIY musician's life whilst building up their career. In your opinion, is there a chance connections one makes move him or her forward in his career path, in case their music is, plainly put, rather ordinary?**

M: No, he or she can have great fun meeting people, but that will not help much if the content – music is not special enough. But, he/she can realize that he/she is better in networking than making music and can maybe start a great career as an organizer, label or artist manager...

**A: Is social media really that important when it comes to boost a popularity of an artist? Is it even more important than live performances and touring? What do you pay attention to at first when you click to a band's page on Facebook?**

M: No, live performance and touring is the most important and is becoming more and more. Social networks are necessary and can be quite powerful tools to make the tours more efficient. But careful tour planning and great show is essential and by far the most important thing.

**A: Does, in your opinion, number of followers in social networks really equal to the number of solvent customers? If so, please, explain why.**

M: It is an important indicator, but not the only one for sure.

**A: When it comes to followers in social media, we can see a huge divide between top "underground" artist (by underground I mean artists regularly performing at showcase festivals) and major artists whose audience is**

**enough to fill in the stadium (by major I mean artists like, for instance, Sia or Rihanna). Do you think it's possible to jump from one state to another? If so, how would you recommend to do this?**

M: No jumping here... just good, hard and stubborn work towards progress.

**A: What, in your opinion, is the key to success?**

M: Amazing music, great performance, professional team, family-like atmosphere in the band and the team around, perseverance, hard work, no border between private and professional life. And having lots of fun with all that 😊